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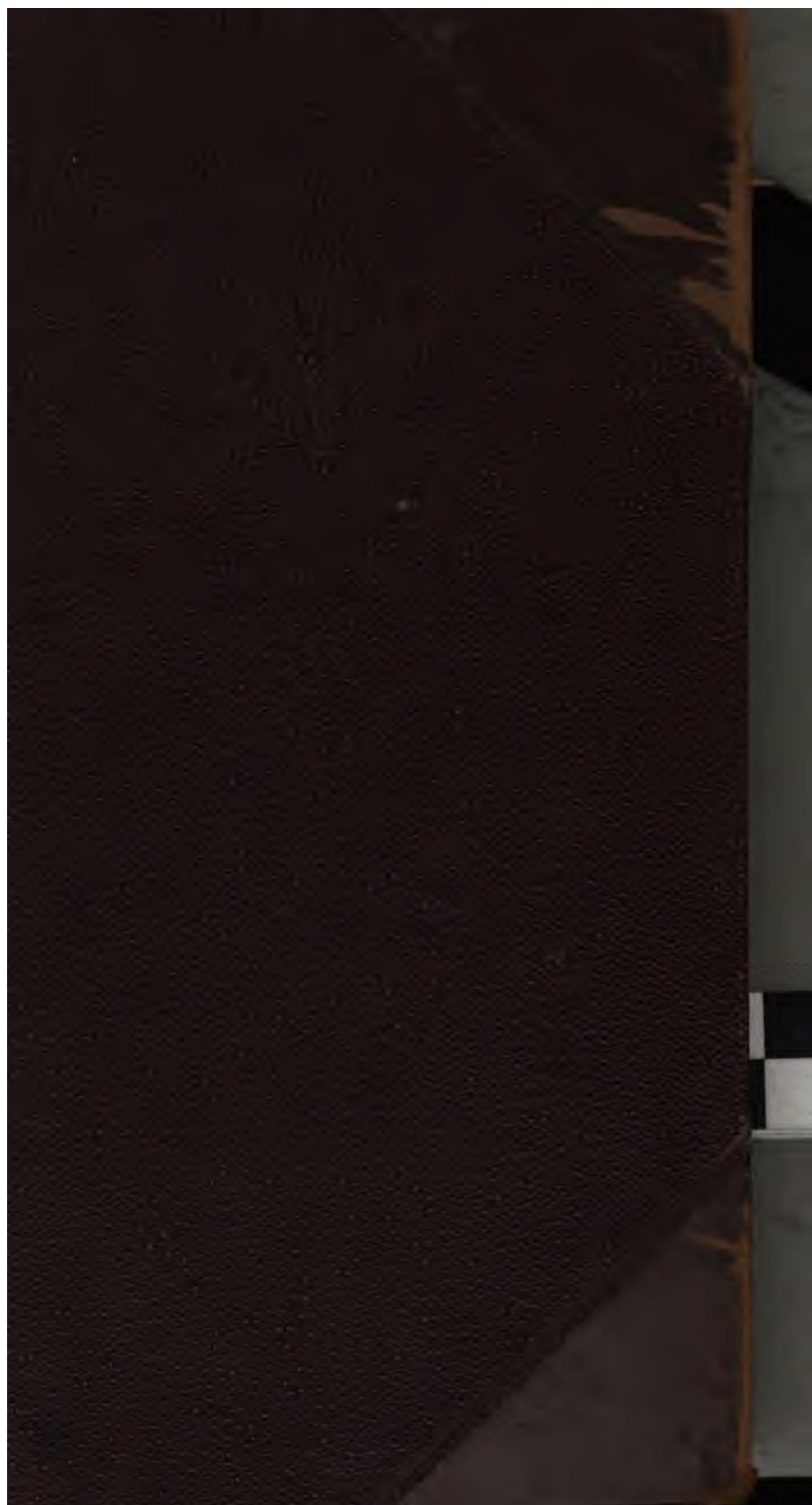
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# LATTER STRUGGLES

## IN THE JOURNEY OF LIFE; OR, THE AFTERNOON OF MY DAYS:

COMPREHENDING CHIEFLY, THE PERIOD  
BETWEEN MY FORTY-FIFTH, AND THE END OF MY SIXTIETH YEAR, BEING  
THE FOURTH BOOK OF MY PILGRIMAGE :

FROM, THE  
*RETROSPECTIONS OF A SEXAGENARIAN:*

IN WHICH,  
SOME OF THE MORE RECENT UPS AND DOWNS,—THE JOYS AND SORROWS,—  
THE HOPES AND DISAPPOINTMENTS,—

OF A LIFE PASSED IN COMPARATIVE OBSCURITY, BUT REplete WITH MUCH STRIKING  
VICISSITUDE, AND NOT WITHOUT SOME OCCASIONAL ATTEMPTS TO BE USEFUL,  
WILL BE FOUND DELINEATED

In such a way, as cannot fail to interest the careful observer of the Providential development of  
human events,—to excite the sympathy of those who admire the patient and persevering efforts of  
suffering humanity, in the midst of misfortunes of an appalling nature, and surrounded  
by difficulties of no ordinary description,—and to impress upon all, the instability  
and uncertainty, of earthly comforts and human acquirements ;

ILLUSTRATING AND INCULCATING AS THE NARRATIVE PROCEEDS,

SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSONS AND SUBLIME MAXIMS OF OUR  
CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY ;

NOT IN EXAMPLES DRAWN FROM FICTITIOUS REPRESENTATIONS; OR IMA-  
GINARY CHARACTERS, EXISTING ONLY IN THE REGIONS OF FANCY AND  
ROMANCE ; BUT FROM THE INCIDENTS, AND EVERY DAY OCCURRENCES, OF  
THE LATTER, AND MOST UNFORTUNATE PART OF, THE REAL LIFE OF

### *A COUNTRY BOOKSELLER :*

Who exercised that profession in his little Provincial Locality with varied success, for the greater  
part of half a century,—during which time, however, he became more extensively useful and better  
known, by his Literary and Editorial labours,—being the author of Popular Philosophy, or  
the Book of Nature Laid Open on Christian Principles, &c.—The affecting History of Tom  
Bragwell,—as well as of a number of minor pieces which have appeared in his different  
publications,—particularly in the Cheap Magazine, and Monthly Monitor, or, Philan-  
thropic Museum ; of both of which, he was the Editor as well as Publisher.

*“What! shall we receive good at the hand of GOD, and shall we not receive evil?”—JOB.*

“Th’ applause of list’ning Senates to command,  
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,  
To scatter plenty o’er a smiling land,  
And read his history in a nation’s eyes,  
H’s lot for bade?”— . . . . . ALT. from GRAY.

“What tho’ no sculptur’d pile his name displays,  
Like those who perish in their country’s cause!  
What tho’ no epic muse, in living lays,  
Records his dreadful daring with applause—  
Vet shall Remembrance from Oblivion’s vale,  
Relieve his scene.”— . . . . . ALT. from FALCONER.



EDINBURGH :—PRINTED BY JAMES COLSTON,  
FOR THE AUTHOR,—GEORGE MILLER, OF DUNBAR, EAST LoTHIAN:  
TO WHOM, OR TO WILLIAM MILLER, BOOKSELLER THERE,  
ORDERS MAY BE ADDRESSED.

*Price Eight Shillings, done up in cloth.*

1833.

210 .      22 .      260 .



## DEDICATION.

---

TO MY KIND FRIENDS, AND FRIENDLY PATRONS

ON THE PRESENT, TO ME,

HIGHLY INTERESTING, THOUGH MOURNFUL, OCCASION,

WHETHER THEY ARE TO BE FOUND AMONG

MY OLD AND MUCH RESPECTED BRETHREN OF THE BOOKSELLING  
PROFESSION,

MY MUCH ESTEEMED VOLUNTARY AUXILIARIES; WHETHER IN, OR  
OUT OF THE TRADE:

OR,

MY KIND, OBLIGING, AND HIGHLY VALUED PRIVATE FRIENDS, WHO  
HAVE EXERTED THEMSELVES TO SERVE ME,

I DESIRE TO DEDICATE, AS IS MOST JUSTLY DUE,  
FOR THE KIND SHARE THEY HAVE TAKEN IN THE ACT OF BRINGING IT  
INTO EXISTENCE, AND OF MAKING IT AVAILABLE, TO THE AUTHOR,  
FOR THE PURPOSES INTENDED,

THE PRESENT VOLUME, COMPRISING MY

LATTER STRUGGLES:

BEING, PRINCIPALLY CONFINED TO THE OCCURRENCES OF THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS; AND  
CONSTITUTING, WHAT MAY BE CALLED, THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE LIFE OF

A SEXAGENARIAN.

WITH MY MOST PERVENT WISHES,

THAT THE BEST BLESSINGS OF THE ALMIGHTY MAY BE SHOWERED DOWN  
UPON THEIR HEADS—THAT THEY BE BLESSED IN  
THEIR BASKET AND IN THEIR STORE—IN  
THEIR FAMILY AND CONNEXIONS—

THEIR HEALTH AND SICKNESS—THEIR LIFE AND DEATH.

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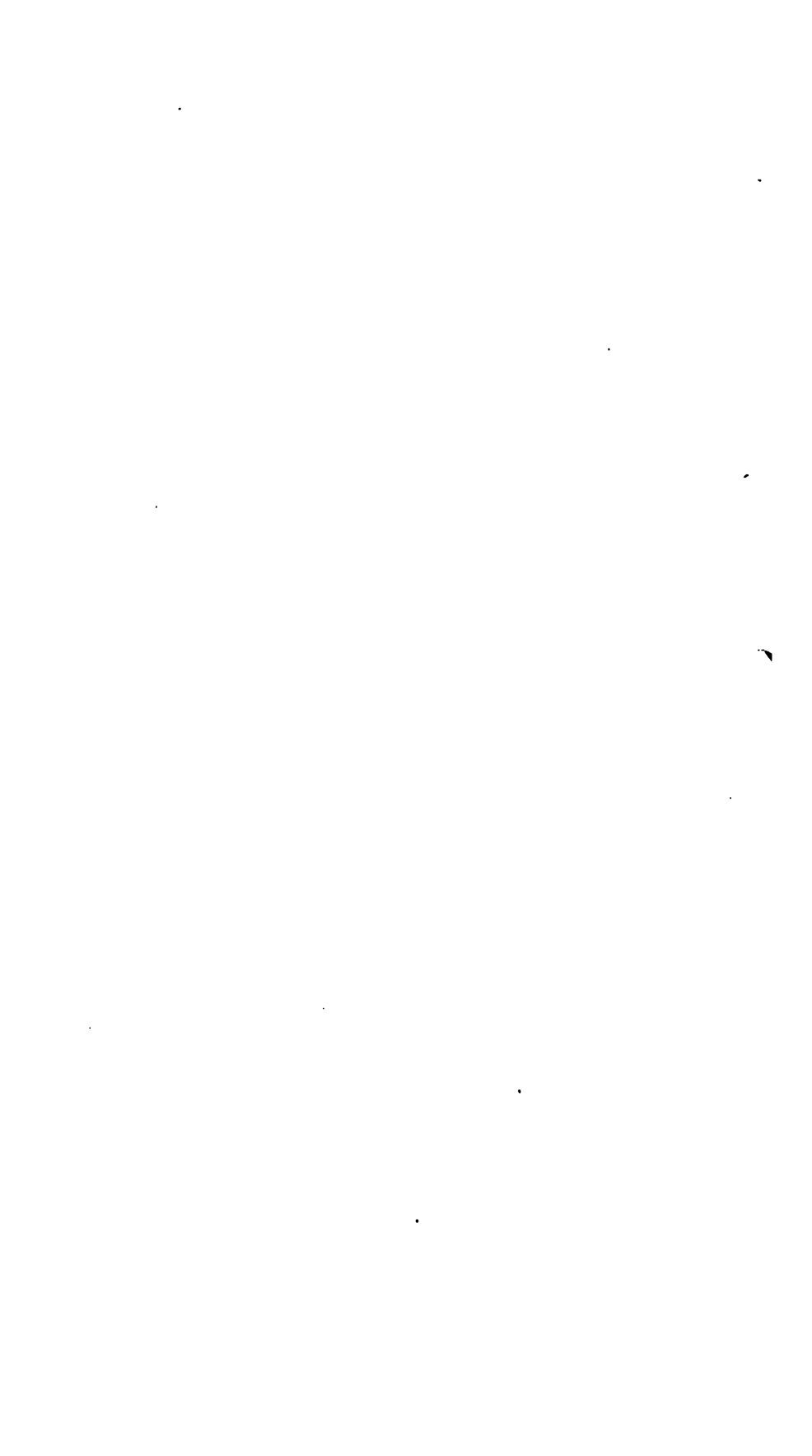
IN THE AFFAIRS OF LIFE

MAY THEY EVER BE UNDER THE PECULIAR CARE OF A WATCHFUL  
PROVIDENCE—AND, WHEN TIME'S CURTAIN IS ABOUT TO DROP, AND  
THEY HAVE ARRIVED NEAR THE CLOSE OF THE JOURNEY OF LIFE,

MAY THAT SWEET REQUIEM

NEVER CEASE SOUNDING IN THEIR EARS, UNTIL, WITH HOPE  
OF LONGER LIFE, SENSATION ITSELF, FAIL,

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL, FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY.



## *A STRING of APOLOGIES by way of PREFACE.*

FROM the circumstance of the present volume, being brought out under the patronage, of my very numerous and respectable Subscribers, it may be naturally inferred, that, the greater part of my kind readers, *must* have seen my Prospectus, and, as the few who have not, may yet have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with a detail of those distressing and afflicting events, under which, I was compelled, to come *once more* before the public at this LATE HOUR OF MY DAY, as they are related in my sixth introductory chapter, and again alluded to, in my XLIV. XLV. and XLVI. towards the conclusion of my volume,—I deem it unnecessary to take up more of their time at present in regard to these matters—especially, as the urgency of my so doing, and the necessity of the case must appear more evident, as the reader draws towards the conclusion of his task, and finds, so truly, all these “*Latter Struggles*” severe, and protracted, as they have been,—end in *discomfiture*—and consequent *disappointment*.

In regard to the appropriateness of my titles, and of my mottoes—the kind of spirit that breathes through—and the description of materials used in the construction of my fabric—as well as the manner in which I have redeemed certain pledges—it may also be unnecessary here to say more, after what has been already stated in my concluding chapter.

But there is one particular there touched upon, which the more I think of it, I see the more reason for again resuming in this stage of my labours, and that is, to apologize still more for the numerous inaccuracies which *must* be supposed to abound in the composition of my work, and which cannot fail to be noticed by those who delight in such discoveries. And this, I conceive, I cannot do better than by now adding, to what I then said, that, instead of my work being expected to be found correct, either in its composition—construction—or grammatical accuracy, it may be rather a matter of surprise, considering the way in which I have been situated during its progress through the press, that there should be found any thing in it, distinguished by correctness in any of these particulars;—for the apology of poor Daniel Defoe, the agreeable entertainer of the juvenile years of us SEXAGENARIANS, although not perfectly to the purpose in all its points, is, as will be found, too generally applicable to my case.

But let us hear what this otherwise agreeable writer, in his preface to his *Jure Divino*, says for himself—“I shall say but very little in the defence of the performance, but this:—it has been wrote under the heaviest weight of intolerable pressure; the greater part of it was composed in prison, and as the author has unhappily felt, the most violent and constant efforts of his enemies to destroy him ever since that, the little composure he has had, must be his short excuse—for any thing incorrect. Let any man, under millions of distracting cares, and the constant ill treatment of the world, consider the power of such circumstances over both *invention* and *expression*, he will then allow, that I had been to be excused, even in worse errors than are to be found in this book.”

Now, although, there is little *invention* in my Narrative, and though I have not been placed, during these few months, in a situation, and under circumstances otherwise, *exactly* similar to those, in which, our old friend, the ingenious author of *Robinson Crusoe* found himself, when he gave vent to the above sorrowful representation of *his* case,—and held it out as the best apology he could offer for any supposeable inaccuracies, which might be found in that particular work in which he had been engaged at the time—yet, it must be allowed, by my considerate friends, that those recent sufferings must have been very acute—as well as most severely felt—by the author of this humble performance—whatever was their na-



ture, and from whatever source they proceeded—which could make him for a season, almost despair of ever being able to bring his task to a completion;—and, to express himself, in the manner, he has repeated, at the conclusion of his XLV. chapter—as being afraid, that these, his “**LATTER STRUGGLES**, would, in the end, turn out **DEADLY CONFLICTS** !”

Under such circumstances, it is too evident, that all present pretensions to accuracy must be laid aside, and, from the extreme severity and hardship in a case, where the business had become so exceedingly pressing, as to admit of no delay, even had not the precariousness of my health, and other considerations, impelled me forward to the completion of my object, with a rapidity which still astonishes myself, at a time when I was so ill able to bear any violent exertion of the kind—I must just trust,—that the extent of my misfortunes,—and a situation so unfavourable to such exertions, as that in which I have been recently placed—will plead at once *powerfully* and *efficaciously* for me.

But, however favourable to me the verdict of the public may be, from these considerations, I am too well convinced, from the exalted ideas I have been led to cherish, in course of my pilgrimage, of the infinitude and variety manifested in the works of the DEITY, that men’s minds are as various, and as diversified, as their faces,—that it would be absolutely impossible for *all* my readers to think alike on some points :—this would be expecting too much from human nature, as at present constituted,—and ill in accordance with, the sage maxim, which we see so often verified, viz —“*That he who attempts,—or expects,—to please everybody,—will please nobody.*”

But the fact is, I look for, and expect, no such thing ;—and while, I trust, I have endeavoured to give satisfaction to *all*, so far as in my power, and I could do so, without any compromise of principle, I shall feel contented, and much gratified, to find, that, although I have not been fortunate enough to please *all*, I have nevertheless, given satisfaction to the *greater part* of my readers ;—and, in order, if possible, to make that greater part *still the greater*, instead of finding fault with, and being disposed to quarrel with the others, I shall endeavour to anticipate sundry objections, which some of them, according to their various turns of thinking, may possibly offer,—and do the best I can, in order to obviate them as I go along—in the hopes that, what may have appeared, when *viewed separately*, or hastily, as defects or blemishes in the superstructure,—may, when looked upon more considerably,—and only as *part of that superstructure*, will, with a little explanation,—turn out to be some of its best characteristics, and greatest excellencies.

In the *first* place, then, one description of my readers may object to the extreme simplicity of the manner in which I have gone to work, and handled my subject—the sameness of the incidents—the common-place nature of my details—and the consequent want of extraordinary adventure, and out-of-the-way descriptions. But, such a remark as this, is the best compliment that could have been paid me—as in the case of the answer of the carter, to the architect, who came up, and put the question to him, just as he was entering upon Musselburgh Bridge—“*Well, my friend, what do you think of this bridge ?*”—“*’Deed, Sir, it no deserves the name of a brig—it’s just like the king’s hee way.*” The carter could not assuredly have paid the stranger, (who, it appears, turned out to be the builder of the bridge himself,) a greater compliment than he did, at that time, although unconsciously ;—and, in a work professing, as mine does, to be a faithful delineation of the events of a certain portion of *real*—not fictitious—**LIFE**,—a strict adherence to facts, and incidents, however homely and common

some of them may appear, is, undoubtedly, the most prudent course that could have been adopted by the author; and, instead of a defect, will, it is hoped, upon second thoughts, be found, to be one of its best recommendations.

A second, may be disposed to object, not so much to the *plain, straight-forward way* I have gone to work, in this respect, in taking facts as they came in my way, and endeavouring to make the best of them, as, to that particular portion of my TIME, to which, I have chiefly confined myself, and which must necessarily have occasioned, that great preponderance of the *rough and gloomy*, over the more *pleasant and sunny scenes* of life. But this, alas! as I have taken occasion to express myself at page 400 of the work itself, was not my fault;—and what else, I may ask, in this place, could be expected from a volume, assuming, and assuming with such apparent good reason, the full-of-meaning appellation of “*LATTER STRUGGLES*,”—and embracing, as it does, so melancholy a portion of my days.

To remedy this, in some measure, it will be seen, that I have gone back, in my introductory chapters, to a few incidents of a more exhilarating nature, than those which will be found to occupy the greater part of *these last fifteen years of my life*; independently, of my not having passed over, without noticing, a number of incidents and little matters in due course of my narrative, which, but for the sake of variety, and lightening the subject a little, I would not perhaps have dwelt on so largely, or, indeed, have noticed at all.

But here, a third party may object, that the cure I have adopted is worse than the disease;—for, that, by introducing so many stories *bordering upon the marvellous*, I must certainly have destroyed much of the simplicity of my narrative,—have converted it into a medium of engendering anew, formerly exploded superstitious notions—and of fostering, the most absurd and delusive ideas;—while, in allusion to a number of little incidents, of a more ordinary nature, he may, at once roundly assert, that such trifling matters, were not worth the mentioning.

These may appear grave charges, at first sight, let us examine them.

There is no part of my task, I believe, more liable to the first objection, than those passages which relate to *Sandy Ferguson's* fright, in the lonely glen betwixt Auchindown and Glass—*my own Ghost story* in the inn at Dalwhinnie—and the *strange-looking figure* which I encountered on the *blasted heath*, near to the place, where, according to Shakspeare, *Macbeth and Banquo met the witches!*—But, then, let it be observed, in the first place, that, I did not go out of my way in any one instance, in quest of these strange matters—and, secondly, the use I made of the several occurrences when I had so met with them.

Was it really to engender and revive a spirit of superstition?—or, was it not, rather, to embrace the several opportunities such occurrences afforded me, to produce a quite opposite, or contrary effect—and to endeavour, by the best explanation in my power, to root out and remove that relic of times gone by, as see in pages 191, 196 and 225, &c. where these circumstances are severally noticed.

Even in the case of my *memorable dream*, although it puzzled me at the time, —and still puzzles me to account for *fully*, on the principles of those who would trace all matters of the kind, with their several ramifications, to the busy workings of a disordered imagination, on past impressions and recent occurrences, it will be found, I have endeavoured to account, as in page 378, for, *as much of it* as I possibly could, upon the above principles, according to the extent of my own perceptive faculties;—and, after putting others in possession of a detail of the *facts*, in order to enable them to judge for themselves, leaving it to them, in the exercise of their own *ingenuity and skill*, to account for the remainder, [or more

*mysterious part*, as they may please,—or, in the best way they can;—without any, the smallest, attempt on my part, to dogmatize either one way or other :—

Although I certainly hold, that, I would be no less inexcusable, to deny that *these mysterious facts* did take place, with the *benign* consequences which followed, merely because I did not, and cannot, comprehend how such strange impressions were produced, as if I were to deny that the human body which I carry about with me, received nourishment from, and had increased in growth as I grew up by, that food, which, after being taken in at the mouth, had passed into the stomach—merely because, with my limited faculties, I cannot account for, the manner in which the assimilating process is afterwards carried on,—by which, a portion of these heterogeneous elements, become “bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh !”

And, although I am not able to explain the hidden causes of *delirium*, and the nature of the mysterious springs which produce those strange effects of conjuring up imaginary spectres, and making them stalk, or stand before us, in all the appearance of reality, at the solemn hour of midnight, as I so fully experienced in the instance described in page 376, &c. still it will be seen that I have traced, or have endeavoured to trace, these matters to a *beneficent* origin, by whatever cause,—manner,—or means,—they are effected.

And in regard to those, little trifling incidents, not worth the mentioning, as it may have been said, did it never strike the objector, that, for some particular reason, or reasons, these, to *him*, little matters, might, at the time they happened, have been deemed as of *some importance to me*.—In short, may they not still be considered in the light of some of those *notched trees* described in the note at page 176, or, as so many indexes, or barometers, to shew the pressure of the Hygeian atmosphere, at particular times ; which, however uninteresting they may be to some of my readers,—it is *still* of some consequence for me to recollect.

Others of my readers, may be disposed to find fault with my having introduced too many flowers in my path—too many encomiums upon myself and my writings—too much matter, bearing the mark of vindication and apology ;—but, in regard to the first, he, certainly, who formed the second objection in my string, could never have considered this in the light of a defect ; and, sure enough, *all the flowers*, and sweet and fragrant many of them were, must now appear to be all few enough, to give sufficient relief to this part of my scene, darkened as it has been, by so many procrastinated and painful conflicts.

With regard to the numerous *encomiums* I have inserted, I trust this will be excused, for the same reason—and will, with every thing in the shape of *vindication* and *apology*, be placed to the credit of the true and operating motive, viz. that as, by the confession of my correspondent, who wrote one of the letters alluded to in page 166, at the time my *great misfortune*—(and which has since led to so many misfortunes)—took place in 1816,—MY NAME *then*, STOOD HIGH IN THE COMMERCIAL WORLD—it might appear, that, however unfortunate I have been since, I have done nothing to forfeit it—and that, in other matters in which I have been engaged, MY NAME STANDS HIGH *still*.

There are others again, who, from having met with a disappointment in their early affections, or, whatever cause, have not had an opportunity of experiencing the benefits, and tasting the sweets and solaces of female society, in such a manner as to enable them to form a true estimate of the matchless value, and inestimable worth of the *virtuous part* of that interesting portion of our species,—and so may be disposed to object to my having gone too far, and been too lavish, as they may be pleased to style it, in *my praises of the female sex*, in devoting (as

I most assuredly have done in my xxxix.) a whole chapter to their service.—While, of those *truant* school-boys, whose backs may have oftener smarted under the inflictions of the rod, than their hearts warmed in gratitude for the unspeakable advantages of early tuition,—and of these cool, calculating mortals, who never evidenced any great *fellow feeling* for those of their own calling and profession—some may be disposed to find fault with me for having said so much as I have done in pages 101 and 102, in favour of that meritorious and deserving class of men—who were the *guides of our youth*, as an old correspondent styles them,

*“while toiling in the paths of classic lore,”*

and others, for having evidenced such decided partiality towards my old brethren of the book trade. But, in regard to the *first*, I must claim the privilege of being allowed, to think as I feel from my own experience, and to speak as I think,—and if, the many obligations I lie under to the *second*—and the warm feeling with which I must ever, in the language of Goldsmith, “fondly turn” to my old brethren of the bookselling profession,—have induced me to take up a larger portion of my volume, than these gentlemen may have thought I was warranted to do—I trust they will now excuse me, for these very forcible reasons.

Others, again, who feel themselves no way interested in these things, may object to my having taken up so much of my room by a description of my numerous and various AUCTION ROUTES—and the minute details, therein given, as to the dates *when*,—and the places *where*,—the different sales took place. To obviate this objection as much as possible, upon finding that a *progressive account of these sales* became a necessary characteristic in the composition of my volume, although they might not be equally interesting to all of my readers, I formed the resolution, to throw them, or the most of them, into a smaller letter, and at the bottom of the pages, by way of notes, where those, who did not wish to read them, might very conveniently pass them over—while, in the mere taking them on record, I knew that I was furnishing a very pleasant treat to others, who, from being purchasers at these sales, or other associations connected with them, might be anxious to know at what time they took place, in their respective localities, and quarters of the country;—and what quarter of the country, it may be asked, after consulting these short, but comprehensive lists, so far as the Scottish auction license extends—has been exempted from a call of one or other of these visitants?

There are some, again, I am aware, who may take offence, at the number of *devout* expressions that may appear in my work—and others, who may express their dissatisfaction at what they may call my *want of good taste*, in making so frequent allusion, to, and in quoting so largely from, Scripture. But, let the former remember, that, in several of my publications, I have given evidence, that I had, at least, a taste for ASTRONOMY;—and what says the poet?—“*DEVOTION! daughter of ASTRONOMY!—An undevout astronomer is MAD.*”

And, in regard to the other part of the accusation, of evincing, by these Scriptural allusions and quotations, a want of good taste—I must certainly deny the consequence; for I think it is rather a mark or characteristic of a *want of good taste*, in a Christian country—or, more properly speaking, in a member of a Christian community, if he is sincere in his profession, and not ashamed of the doctrines of that religion, which he affects to believe—not to quote freely, and as occasion requires, provided he does so with becoming reverence, from what he should consider as his principal text-book;—however lavish he may be otherwise, in his references to, and quotations from, the authorities of Greece and Rome—of which, it is presumed there will be found no want also, in these pages.

Bad taste, indeed!—Let us hear what the deep thinking, and acute reasoning,

Even the Lord Chancellor himself, when he sees the moderation of my views will, I trust, if ever these pages meet his eye, be the more disposed to excuse the hint given him in page 89, whether he deem it worthy of his attention or not.

But here comes the last, that my limits will allow me to touch upon, but which, considering me *yet* in the light of a bookseller, (which I certainly am in one sense, and in the present instance,) may be accounted the most serious because the most sordid charge of them all,—and that is, that I have converted my present into a kind of advertising medium for my other publications,—and as, a sort of harbinger to announce the forthcoming of another volume or volumes, in continuation of this.

In regard to the first part of the charge, I would observe, that if any thing I have said, or others have said for me in these pages, may be the means of drawing the attention of any of my readers, or their friends, to the few copies of my former publications I have yet to dispose of, and now offer, for a limited time, on the very reasonable terms mentioned in the Appendix, I certainly will feel much gratified; and as this will assuredly be quite in accordance with, and in furtherance of, my present attempt, I would fain hope, that, on reconsidering the matter, not one of my kind friends, will be disposed to begrudge me, the opportunity, that my present work offers, for carrying that part of my plan into effect.

And as to the other part of the objection, viz. that I have made my present volume a sort of harbinger, to announce the forthcoming of another, or others, in its train;—this, at present, need give no person any concern. For, it must be evident, from what I have said elsewhere, that there may be still much betwixt the cup and the lip in this respect; and that although, there may be no danger of my being in want of *materials*, or *titles* to my volumes, as mentioned in page 400, and no likelihood of any want of the *WILL*, on my part, should circumstances otherwise warrant, and encourage me to go forward, as mentioned in the note at page 404, yet, from various considerations there noticed, it must be apparent, that the best course I can adopt for the present, is to drop all idea of any thing of the kind,—until we see, what *TIME*, which works so many changes, will produce.

And, in the meantime, I must proceed, with the aid of my kind friends, to what is now *evidently* my *first* consideration, viz. the winding up of the *present concern*, with all possible expedition, and other matters enumerated towards the close of the note above alluded to; in order that, I may be the better enabled to make my *present efforts*, so soon as possible, available, for the purposes for which they were originally intended:—and in the further cultivation and prosecution of our little *HOME TRADE* or *RETAIL BUSINESS*, which, I trust, the fruits of these exertions will be the means of enabling us to carry on with more advantage to ourselves, and satisfaction to our kind customers; who, I confidently hope, will not be inclined to think the worse of us, after being put in possession of these afflict-ing details,—accompanied as they are, by so many flattering testimonials, and other corroborating evidence, that, as I have before observed, these misfortunes, *were not according to our deservings*;—but on the contrary—(while my partner is able to maintain the situation, to which she has been so long accustomed, at the back of the counter, and I am able to superintend the business generally, and to afford all the assistance requisite, in my own more particular department, or departments)—be disposed *still*, to continue to favour us with a share of their kind orders;—for which, and what other proportion of the public favour, a kind Providence may be pleased to send us,—as well as for the obliging patronage we have so largely experienced on the present occasion,—I fervently trust—**WE SHALL NEVER CEASE TO BE GRATEFUL!**

DUNBAR, July 1, 1833.

# A SHORT ANALYSIS OF THE CONTENTS

## OF THE DIFFERENT CHAPTERS :

*Intended to serve as a key to the dates—and a few of the principal subjects treated of, being all that is deemed necessary, in a work, where brevity has been studied, in the construction of the chapters in general, and each is accompanied at its respective head, with so luminous and comprehensive an analysis, or table, of its contents.*

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\* \* *Erratum*—Since the concluding chapter came from press, I have observed *Cadras* used in page 402, instead of *Codrus*. This I see, is no fault of the printer, being an error of my own in transcribing;—and which, with *all* others, I trust, will be kindly excused, for the reasons noticed in the preface.

# LATTER STRUGGLES

IN THE

## JOURNEY OF LIFE, &c.

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"MANY UPS AND DOWNS YOU HAVE HAD IN THIS WORLD BUT WE SHOULD REMEMBER THIS IS NOT OUR RESTING PLACE."—See Letter to the Author from an old acquaintance, and much valued and esteemed correspondent, of date 12th January, 1832.

"AFTER A LIFE OF CONTINUED, UNWEARIED EXERTIONS, IN HONEST INDUSTRY,—TO SUCH A MIND AS YOURS, IT IS A MOST SEVERE BLOW."—From another Letter to the Author, by the much-respected surviving partner of a House, with which, he had been long in the practice of doing business; and received soon after the announcement of his recent calamity.

### CHAPTER I.

One half of the world knows not how the other lives.—Nothing very magnanimous in some persons bearing up under misfortune.—What constitutes true greatness of mind in such circumstances.—Goldsmith's highly appropriate story of the disabled soldier, quoted.—Much truth and meaning in the doctrine of the silver spoon and wooden ladle;—as also, in that of "man being," in a certain sense, "the creature of circumstances."—No circumstances, nor combination of circumstances, above, or beyond, the control of Providence.—Lines from Cowper.—Apt illustration of the wooden-ladle class, in the case of Goldsmith himself,—of the silver-spoon class, in the instance of our late great modern poet, antiquarian, and novelist.—Old-fashioned truths strikingly exemplified in the contrary experiences of these two highly-gifted individuals.—The race is not to the swift, &c.—Man, nevertheless, born to, and fitted for, a life of activity.—Calls, and inducements, and motives, to exertion.—Life's cares are comforts.—Favourite poets in my younger days.—Test of reputation according to Cicero.—Criterion to judge by, according to the doctrine of the New Testament.

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It has been remarked, by Goldsmith, in the introduction to one of his amusing and instructive Essays; that which contains the highly interesting and pathetic story of "The Disabled Soldier"—that "no observation is more common, and at the same time more true, than that one half of the world are ignorant how the other lives;"—that "the misfortunes of the great

are held up to engage our attention—are enlarged upon in terms of declamation—and the world is called upon to gaze at the noble sufferers ;”—and that “ the great, under the pressure of calamity, are conscious of several others sympathising with their distress, and have at once the comfort of admiration and pity ;”—justly observing, “ there is nothing magnanimous in bearing misfortunes with fortitude, when the whole world is looking on. Men, in such circumstances, will act bravely, even from motives of vanity ; but HE who, in the vale of obscurity, can brave adversity,—who, without friends to encourage, acquaintances to pity, or even without hope to alleviate his misfortunes, can behave with tranquility and indifference,—is truly great. Whether peasant or courtier, HE deserves admiration, and should be held up for our imitation in this respect. I have been led into these reflections,” continues this pleasing and ingenious writer, “ from accidentally meeting, some days ago, a poor fellow, whom I knew when a boy, dressed in a sailor’s jacket, and begging at one of the outlets of the town, with a wooden leg. I knew him to have been honest and industrious when in the country, and was curious to learn what had reduced him to his present situation ; wherefore, after giving him what I thought proper, I desired to know the history of his life and misfortunes, and the manner in which he was reduced to his present distress. The disabled soldier—for such he was, though dressed in a sailor’s habit—scratched his head, and, leaning on his crutch, put himself into an attitude to comply with my request, and gave me his history.”

My limits do not permit me to enter largely into the story of the poor battered and mutilated mendicant ; nor is it of much consequence that I should do so, as the affecting narrative, I dare say, from the known popularity of the author, is already, or has been, in the hands of the greater part of my readers ; but there is one passage at the commencement, and another towards the conclusion, that I cannot forbear quoting, as going far to prove, not only the magnanimity and heroism with which men, in the most humble conditions of society, can bear up under misfortunes of the most disastrous nature, but, the aptitude of persons of this description, and so circumstanced, to derive consolation from the consideration that

matters might have been still worse with them ; and to be thankful, in the midst of their privations, for the blessings they are still allowed to possess ;—another merciful ordination in the operations of that benign Providence, which tempers the weather to the shorn lamb—makes the little child well pleased in the exclusive enjoyment of his painted rattle—enables the youthful aspirant to bear up in the midst of repeated disappointments, from a consciousness of his partial successes, and the greater failures of others around him—and the aged, and way-worn pilgrim on life's journey, to take comfort, in the near prospect of another and a better world, for the toils and miseries he has experienced and endured in this.

“As for my misfortunes, master,” commenced the, by no means, unwilling narrator, “I can't pretend to have gone through any more than other folks ; for, except the loss of my limb, and my being obliged to beg, I don't know any reason, thank Heaven, that I have to complain. There is Bill Tibbs, of our regiment, he has lost both his legs, and an eye to boot ; but, thank Heaven, it is not so bad with me yet.” And, towards the end of his tale, he goes on to observe, “I was once more in the power of the French ; and, I believe it would have gone hard with me, had I been brought back to Brest ; but, by good fortune, we were retaken by the Viper. I had almost forgot to tell you, that, in that engagement, I was wounded in two places,—I lost four fingers of the left hand, and my leg shot off. If I had had, the good fortune to have lost my leg, and the use of my hand, on board a King's ship, and not on board a privateer, I should have been entitled to clothing and maintenance during the rest of my life ; but that was not my chance :—ONE MAN IS BORN WITH A SILVER SPOON IN HIS MOUTH, AND ANOTHER WITH A WOODEN LADLE.”

Now, although I am neither a convert to that part of the doctrine, in the introduction to the story, which reckons it a species of magnanimity to be *indifferent* to the pressure of the evils of life,—nor to the propriety of that kind of reasoning, which induced the poor simple narrator to “hate the French,” for no better a reason than “because they were all slaves, and wore wooden shoes,” as he takes occasion to mention, in course of his narrative ; yet, I must allow, there is

much truth and meaning in that of "the silver spoon and wooden ladle," although here given in rather uncouth and vulgar terms;—as there is also, in the dogma of our modern utilitarians, that "man is the creature of circumstances," although, that also, might have been expressed in a more becoming and happy manner,—seeing there are no circumstances, nor combination of circumstances, above, or beyond, the control of that Providence, which, with the same ease that it confines the erratic comet to its orbit, and prevents (notwithstanding the vain fears and silly surmises of shallow reasoners) the possibility of its clashing with any of the others of the heavenly bodies in its movements, and binds the other inanimate and irresponsible subjects of the widely extended kingdom of nature "fast in fate,"—can leave free, to a certain degree, (although totally incomprehensible by us), the wonderful workings, of the mysteriously limited energies, of "the human will."<sup>\*</sup>

No truth, indeed, is more clear, as things are presently constituted, than, that let some men's talents, qualifications, and acquirements, be what they may, and let their industry and application in the use of them be ever so great, they cannot, with all their exertions, rise above a certain mediocrity in their circumstances, far less obtain any considerable share of the riches, honours, and what men are taught to call, the

\* The following lines convey some idea of what the poet Cowper, who saw more clearly than some of his contemporaries into many matters, must have thought and felt, on this mysterious subject:—

"Happy the man, who sees a God employed  
In all the good and ill that chequer life!  
Resolving all events, with their effects,  
And manifold results, into the will  
And arbitration wise of a Supreme."

And again—

————— "God gives to every man  
The virtue, temper, understanding, taste,  
That lifts him into life, and lets him fall  
Just in the niche he was ordained to fill.  
To the deliverer of an injured land,  
He gives a tongue to enlarge upon, a heart  
To feel, and courage to redress, her wrongs;  
To monarchs, dignity,—to judges, sense,—  
To artists, ingenuity and skill."

glories of the world ; while others, in no respect superior to them in talent, or industry, easily, and, in some cases, apparently with little effort, rise rapidly in the scale of wealth, honours, and distinction, until they astonish the world by their success, if they do not become a wonder to themselves.

Of the *wooden-ladle class*, we have not only a very apt illustration in the hero of the story, and promulgator of the doctrine, who seems, by the tenor of his narrative, to have been the victim of misfortune, from almost the moment of his birth, until that, in which his old acquaintance found him, in such a pitiable plight, at one of the outlets of the town ; but, in the case of poor Goldsmith himself, who, although so highly gifted by nature, in point of talents and other qualifications, as to be accounted one of the most amiable of naturalists—most pleasing of historians—most enchanting of novelists—and sweetest and truest of poets that ever sung,—was not likely, as one of the nine children of a poor country clergyman, yet

“Passing rich with forty pounds a-year,”

to have come into the world with any superabundance, or the means of obtaining any superabundance, of the good things of this life ; and whose natural simplicity, benevolent disposition, and unflinching integrity, even if there had been fewer eccentricities in his conduct, never could, and never would, allow him to push himself forward in the way of improving his circumstances, although the short span allotted to his mortal career had been doubled.

The amiable and unsuspecting qualities of this man's heart,—who may be described, in one of the lines of Gay's epitaph, as written by Pope, as “In wit, a man ; simplicity a child,”—it is well known, led him into an error that drove him forth as a “TRAVELLER” to take his “PROSPECT OF SOCIETY,” amidst “Alpine solitudes,” and other parts of Europe, ere yet he had completed his College studies at Edinburgh ; and it is equally notorious, that the unbending disposition of this noble-minded man, himself the well-known author of “*She Stoops to Conquer*,” would never permit him to stoop to conquer the favours of fortune, by any of the base and despicable arts as

commonly, and so successfully practised, by modern sycophancy.

As an instance of the *silver-spoon class*, I do not conceive I can adduce a better example, than that of our late great modern poet, antiquarian, and novelist, who has just paid the debt of nature, and gone down to the tomb.

According to the account Sir Walter Scott has given of himself, he must have come into the world with the silver spoon in his mouth, in the true sense of the word. "The private fortune, also," he observes, in the interesting memoir written by himself, "which I might expect, and finally inherited from my family, did not, indeed, amount to affluence, *but placed me considerably beyond all apprehension of want;*" and, as he came into the world with the means of enjoying some few of the luxuries of life, which we may legitimately infer from the use he has made of the word *considerably*, so this gifted individual, among his other gifts, does not seem to have been deficient in that kind of dexterity, to which he alludes in the confabulation he had with his lady, as reported by the Messrs Chambers of Edinburgh (in the 39th number of their widely circulated Journal), when, he took occasion to request of her, to take his "word for it, 'tis *skill* leads to *fortune*,"—and, that he did avail himself of that *skill*, even before his *genius* had been acknowledged by competent judges, or his works had made much noise in the world, beyond a certain circle, is evident from the circumstance of his having secured to himself, through the influence of his friends, so early as December 1799, the appointment of Sheriff of Selkirkshire, to which was attached a salary of L.300; and afterwards, in 1806, the reversionary appointment of the office of Principal Clerk of Session, which, in course of a few years, brought him an additional revenue of L.1200 per annum,—both of which events, it must be observed, took place, long before Waverley, the first of the series of his far-famed prose productions had made its appearance; so that the mighty enchanter must have been up to the art, or arts; or, in the words of Cowper, the "ingenuity and skill" of conjuring up more of the gifts of fortune, and of clenching the silver spoon he had originally been put in pos-

session of, more firmly in his grasp ; long before his name, or his fame, as an author, had gone much abroad into the world.\*

But, after all, Sir Walter lived long enough to see, by the unhappy revulsion that took place in his pecuniary affairs in the beginning of 1826, that all the *good luck* he experienced in the circumstances of his birth, and all the *skill* he had displayed in improving these circumstances, were not sufficient to ensure to him *a continuance* of "the gifts of fortune." That, in the present constitution of things, there is, indeed, another truth, or rather series of truths, which, although from the time they were uttered, and the circumstance of their being found, as forming part of the contents of an old-fashioned book, they may have received the appellation of *old-fashioned truths*, will, nevertheless, be seen to have had the most ample confirmation from the experience of mankind, in every age of the world, viz. "That the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong: neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to *men of skill* ; but *time* and *chance* happeneth to them all." And that, although these truths, like others recorded in Holy Writ, are conveyed, to make them the more universally applicable, in what may be called general

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\* Among the fortunate circumstances that came across the path of this highly-favoured individual of the *silver-spoon class*, and which served much to forward his views on entering upon his career, was his early acquaintance and consequent alliance with, a coadjutor so well fitted for his purpose, by congeniality of sentiment, and a similar turn of thinking, as his printer,—a gentleman of whom it may be said that he never betrayed *the great secret*, and perhaps other secrets which his early friend and patron may have intrusted him with, to the last; but whose value in other respects in the line of his profession, has been thus *justly* estimated by the Messrs Chambers, in a note affixed to their brief, but very interesting Life of Sir Walter:—"The carelessness of Sir Walter Scott in all his compositions, found a most fortunate correction in the taste and good sense of this gentleman, who had the fortune to be his printer from nearly the commencement of his literary career, as if fate, had united the two, in their respective capacities, by an unalterable decree." Alas! it may now be added, at a period but a few months distant from the time when this note was penned, that as these individuals were so firmly united by so many ties in their lives, so in their deaths they were not long divided! Mr James Ballantyne, the printer of the above memoir, having also departed this life on the 24th of January of the present year (1833), making one more melancholy blank, in the number, of my highly respectable subscribers for the present work.



terms; and the first part of the series may be considered as more particularly applying to such a character as I have brought forward to form the counterpart of my contrast, yet, it requires no great discernment to discover, to which of the two characters, the latter part of the series now more particularly applies. Yes! if the first part of the doctrine here laid down in such plain and distinct terms, as that he who runneth may read, may be considered as having its confirmation, in the case of Goldsmith; the latter, may assuredly be said, *now*, to have had its most ample fulfilment in that of Sir Walter Scott—who, too soon found, for his comfort, that as there had been for him “a time to gain,” there was also for him “a time to lose;” and that, at *the time* he spoke so unwittingly (I shall not give it a harsher term) to Mr Wordsworth, in the early part of 1831,\* in respect to having “twenty years mind and health in him yet,” no doubt in the hope of being able to devote them to the purpose of relieving his pecuniary engagements, the noblest trait in Sir Walter’s character, *the chance*, was so much against him, that he should not see the end of the following year!

It is not, however, to be inferred from this, that man is to lie down in a state of useless apathy at the moment of his birth; or, to stand still, as he grows up, with his arms folded in sullen indifference, on account of his uncertainty of success in accumulating the good things of a present life, or the insecurity of his tenure, after he has accumulated them; for, although it may be considered a hard matter to toil on for a length of time, only to see our efforts thwarted, and our fondest hopes overturned or blasted, just at the time we conceived them to be on the point of being realized;—and a harder still, to have our expectations all blown up, and our fondest anticipations dissipated and scattered before the winds of Heaven, at the precise moment, when we had considered them as having arrived at maturity:—

Yet, the early wants and instincts of our nature, must soon produce their necessary consequences, in arousing the

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\* See reported conversation with Mr W., Imperial Magazine, November 1832, p. 502.

feeble child into action, in order to have his earliest infantile wants supplied.

The developement of his reasoning powers, as he grows up, by his span being prolonged, cannot fail to convince a mind rightly constituted, from the conformation of the various parts of his body and the unsuppressible energies of the intellectual portion of his nature, that, of all creatures, man, was not made for a state of supineness, or inaction, and point out, as his proper field for exertion, HIS Individual, HIS Relative, HIS Social, and, if all is right with his mental rulers, and they are not distorted and warped by prejudice, HIS Devotional duties; while, to render the knowledge of his duty, and expectations, the more complete, RELIGION steps forward to his aid, and, kindly pointing to the skies, bids him set his affections upon the things that are above, for that, this is not his final resting place;—bids him bear up with fortitude, patience, and resignation, under all the trials, and difficulties, and struggles of life, in the prospect of a better, more lasting, and enduring inheritance, where, heavenly HOPE whispers, all that seems mysterious, unaccountable, and perplexing, in this mortal state, shall be cleared up; and “the mighty maze, without a plan,” as it now appears to be, to short-sighted mortals, shall no less astonish, by the order, and concord, and harmony, that prevail in its several parts, than astound and startle, when taken collectively, by the infinitude of its magnitude, and splendour of its magnificence:—and fair SCIENCE teaches us, from the greatest discovery she has ever yet made, and which, in fact, amounts, notwithstanding all her recent helps, aids, and inventions, to no more than what she had discovered in the patriarchal ages, viz., only

“To know how little can be known,”

to take a lesson from our ignorance, and not to presume to scan too critically, by our imperfect and feeble powers, far less to find fault with, by our very limited faculties, the operations of that all-powerful and MIGHTY MIND, which, at the present moment, after all the assistance modern science has received from her more recent discoveries and searching instruments, puts the same confounding and puzzling question to human vanity, as in the days of the good man of the

land of Uz,—“Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?” and utterly silences all disposition to future cavilling, by that cutting rebuke to human pride.

“He who, through vast immensity can pierce;  
See worlds on worlds compose one universe;  
Observe how system into system runs,  
What other planets circle other suns,  
What varied Being peoples every star,—  
May tell, why Heaven has made us as we are.”

“Presumptuous man! the reason wouldst thou find,  
Why formed so weak, so little, and so blind?  
First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,  
Why formed no weaker, blinder, and no less?”

But as such knowledge is *still* too high for us, as it was in the days of Job—still beyond the possibility of our attainment, in this, our mortal state of existence, it certainly would be more becoming in us, rather, than display our ignorance, as well as presumption, by manifesting any disposition to cavilling, to take the short but comprehensive advice of the bard of Twickenham, whom I have just quoted:—

“Hope humbly then, on trembling pinions soar,  
Wait the great teacher DEATH, and God adore.”

Which advice, it will be observed, is most powerfully backed by the language of the sweetly singing muse of the poet of the Seasons, in drawing towards the end of his task on WINTER:—

“Ye vainly wise! ye blind presumptuous! now,  
Confounded in the dust, adore that Power,  
And Wisdom, oft arraign’d! See now the cause,  
Why unassuming worth in secret lived,  
And died, neglected;—Why the good man’s share  
In life was gall, and bitterness of soul;—  
Why the lone widow, and her orphans, pin’d  
In starving solitude; while luxury,  
In palaces, lay straining her low thought,  
To form unreal wants;—Why heaven-born truth,  
And moderation fair, wore the red marks  
Of Superstition’s scourge;—Why licens’d pain,  
That cruel spoiler, that embosom’d foe,  
Imbitter’d all our bliss.

Ye good distrest!  
Ye noble few! who here, unbending, stand  
Beneath life’s pressure, yet bear up a while;  
And what your bounded view, which only saw  
A little part, deemed evil, is no more!”

And we have the more reason to proceed in our duty, when animated and inspired, to bear up under the pressure of the

accumulated ills of life, by considerations such as these, from the comfortable truths advanced, and held forth, by another of the sons of song of the last century, the well known author of "Night Thoughts:"—

"Life's cares are comforts; such, by Heav'n design'd;  
He that has none, must make them, or be wretched.  
Cares are employments; and, without employ,  
The soul is on the rack; the rack of rest,  
To souls most adverse; action, all their joy!"

And again,—

—— "The man who consecrates his hours,  
By vig'rous effort, and an honest aim,  
At once he draws the sting of life and death;  
He walks with nature;—and her paths are peace."

Such were the doctrines taught, by these, and others of the favourite poets of my juvenile days, among whom I may reckon GRAY, who wrote his beautiful Elegy in a Country Church-yard, in the middle of the last,—MILTON, whose sublime effusions shed a lustre over part of the preceding,—and COWPER, who finished his earthly TASK, in the first year of the present, century: And, there can be no doubt, that their writings were not without their influence, in the formation of *my early opinions*, as well as of those of some of my contemporaries.

It remains to be seen, in the course of time, whether the doctrines taught and inculcated by the Byrons and the Scotts, of more modern date, will ensure, for themselves, an equally lasting reputation, as the afore-mentioned worthies have done; or afford to their admirers, so much solid mental food and nourishment, as may be, and have been, derived from the labours of their predecessors in this species of literature; adopting it as the test, to try the one, the definition of CICERO, who held "True honour to be, the concurrent approbation of good men," for this forcible reason, "Such, only, being fit to give true praise, who are, themselves, praiseworthy;"—and the criterion, to judge of the others by, THE FRUITS such doctrines are found calculated, in their tendencies, to produce;—which rule of judging, will be found, to be exactly conformable, to the standard laid down in the NEW TESTAMENT.

## CHAPTER II.

Good reasons why, man should not think of deserting his post in the hour of trial.—Two descriptions of persons particularly excluded, by Rousseau, from the commission of suicide.—Christianity embraces a more comprehensive and perfect system of ethics.—No individual, by her standard, allowed to commit such a cowardly crime.—Other methods of suicide, besides the more sudden and violent ones—Who may be classed, among the betrayers of their trust, and true cowards of society.—Human life a state of trial and probation.—A kind of isthmus, or middle state of preparation for another world—May be considered as a passage to another country; or, as I have expressed it on my title,—a Journey.—Different estimation, in which the man is held who boldly sets his front to the battle, to him, who barely deserts his post in the moment of danger.—Sublime spectacle, according to Seneca,—Angels' estimate of human worth, according to Addison —Fortitude in adversity, one of the heroical virtues in morals, according to Lord Bacon.—My conflicts, however severe and procrastinated, bear no resemblance whatever, to those of "the man of the hundred battles."—One comfort to those who move in the humbler spheres of life;—Another, they have not a hard task-master to deal with.—An important question, how it only can be answered.—Other questions arising out of the former, which the Sexagenarian may be allowed to put, and which admit of more easy solution.

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BUT, if it is not to be surmised, that man, in consequence of any obstacles he may meet with, or difficulties he may find in his way, and which, a little time, and patient perseverance, might enable him to remove or overcome, is to lie down, or stand still, a jaring string in the creation of God,—while so much harmony, in the midst of such ceaseless activity, prevails, and is produced, around him; so, far less, is it to be imagined, that a Being, possessed with so many noble, and ennobling powers and energies, as he is, should deem himself at liberty to desert his post in the hour of trial, or fly like a coward from that contest, in which, a little firmness of mind, and a proper exercise of the faculties, which nature, who (to use a homely phrase) usually "makes the back meet for the burden," has furnished him with, might enable him to come off victorious.

There are two descriptions of persons particularly excluded, according to the reasoning of Jean Jacques Rousseau, from

the commission of suicide, viz., the FATHER OF A FAMILY, the well-being of which might be a good deal involved, or wrapt up, in the prolongation of his life,—and the DEBTOR, the interests of whose creditors might suffer by his demise; but, if this amiable enthusiast in some respects, had allowed himself to be influenced in others, by the more comprehensive and expansive system of Christian ethics, instead of the principles he had embraced, and acted on, as a deistical philosopher, he would soon have discovered, that the same kind of reasoning might, with equal propriety, have been applied to *every individual of the human race*. There was much meaning, indeed, in the benevolent commandment, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;” and should there be, or have been, any mistake on that head, it must be completely obviated by the answer given to the question,—“And who is my neighbour?” by the great founder of Christianity himself;—for no man, possessed of the smallest powers of discrimination and judgment, can mistake the meaning of the parable of the good Samaritan, however it may operate against antiquated prejudices, or previously conceived barbarous opinions.

Yes, there can be no doubt, that, according to the doctrine of the truly philanthropic religion of the New Testament, all mankind must be considered in the light of brethren—not only children of the same common parent, but all interested in each other's comfort and welfare, by the same mutual and reciprocal ties. The Christian debtor, and father of a family, has therefore a double claim upon HIM to continue at the post allotted to him by providence, until he is relieved in the natural way, and so, at the appointed time; because, besides the considerations above alluded to—and these are far from being unimportant—he has *other ties* of consanguinity, and other feelings to attend to and consult, before he betakes himself to the dreadful alternative, and is undone. And this expression, I do not wish to be understood, as meant to be confined entirely to those, who, placed in such responsible and interesting circumstances, have recourse to the more sudden and violent means of getting rid of their present mode of existence. They are all suicides, in principle, although differing in the manner of carrying their intentions into exe-

cution, who, under the pressure of any calamity whatever, fly to the cup of intoxication, to drown their sorrows, as they say; but which, a little reflection, during their lucid intervals from this dreadful infatuation, must convince them, is only to sink themselves, alas! the deeper in that misery, which it would be their wisdom rather to *strive* to remove. These are the true cowards of society—the pusillanimous deserters of the sacred trust committed to their charge—the betrayers of the rights, and claims upon them, it may be, of their own poor helpless family; and, at all events, the fell destroyers of their own health, reputation, and future means of subsistence; to say nothing of, as a farther aggravation of the mischiefs they occasion, the fearful wounds they make in the feelings of those, who feel more for them, than, to all appearance, they feel for themselves! And what do they gain by this, in the estimation of the public? To be branded as being addicted to a *beastly* vice, and occasionally pointed out by the finger of scorn as being “as drunk as David’s Sow;”—but neither the one expression, or the other, is sufficiently strong, or properly applied, to mark the dreadful enormity of this most disgusting, and degrading—may I not rather call it—*unnatural crime*, sinking, as it does, the noble creature man, beneath his inferiors in the scale of creation; for intoxication is not the vice of the lower animals; and David’s Sow, notwithstanding all its filthy and grovelling propensities, was never seen reeling home drunk in its life!

In regard to Christianity, it totally disclaims them; for, a *Christian drunkard* is an anomaly that *cannot* possibly exist in the creation. The moment a man of that denomination betakes himself to a course of intemperance, he renounces his profession, and ceases to be a Christian; the laws of which, while they forbid not the temperate and moderate use of the good things of this life, being quite peremptory, and perfectly explicit on this head.

It is, indeed, impossible to conceive a right of human life, and “to vindicate,” in the language of an author I have already, more than once, quoted, “the ways of God to man,” in plain and intelligible terms, otherwise, than by considering it in the light of a state of trial and probation—as a kind of

isthmus, or middle state, in which we are undergoing the process of climatizing, or fitting, previous to being transplanted into another clime—a passage to another country; or, as I have expressed it in my title—a Journey—in which we have many troubles and difficulties to meet with, in order to try our patience—many temptations and allurements to resist, in order to try our virtue—and where we have many battles to fight, and conflicts, some of them of a very arduous and painful nature to endure, in order to try our fortitude, and put to the test, our belief in those comfortable truths of our benign and holy religion, that are, at once, as I have ever found them, our greatest solace and consolation, under the complicated evils of life—and, as I have every reason to expect, to find them at the last—our most sovereign antidote against the fear of death.

In what different estimation from the determined suicide, who flies at one dire leap from the arena of human exertion, or who—for I see no reason for making any modification, or difference, in the manner of expression—incapacitates himself, by a more gradual system of self-destruction, from being farther useful to himself and others in the concerns of time—ay, and I may add, on viewing this life as a journey, in the concerns of eternity also!—I say, in what a different estimation from such a one, must be held the man, who, whatever may be his situation in life, puts his front manfully to the battle, evidencing, in the whole of his unflinching conduct, the most unbroken resolution to persevere, and, if possible, to overcome!

Is it any matter of surprise, then, that, in the opinion of the virtuous Seneca, “a good man struggling with the storms of fate,” should present such a spectacle—such a sublime exhibition of moral courage—as “to make the gods look down upon it with pleasure;” and that, to the same purpose, although couched in a more Christian language, our illustrious Addison, should be led to express himself, in the following terms:—“Were angels, if they look into the ways of men, to give in their catalogue of worthies, how different would it be from that which any of our own species would draw up. We are dazzled with the splendour of titles, the ostentation



of learning, and the noise of victories. They, on the contrary, see the philosopher in the cottage, who possesses his soul in patience, and thankfulness, under the pressure of, what little minds call poverty and distress. The evening's walk of a wise man is more illustrious, in their sight, than the march of a general at the head of a hundred thousand men. A contemplation of God's works, a generous concern for the good of mankind, and unfeigned exercise of humility," he might have here added, and the most perfect resignation to the will of God, in every dispensation of his providence, whether prosperous or adverse, "only denominate men great and glorious."

It was, no doubt, from considerations such as these, that an authority, which, I believe, has been sometimes quoted as our British Solomon (I mean Lord Bacon), reckoned that fortitude, which springs from, or arises out of, adversity, in MORALS, among the more heroical virtues; and, it is no doubt equally true, that from such considerations, I might be induced to mention, as I did, the high-sounding appellation of "the man of the hundred battles," in my humble prospectus, without being aware of its being, in any way, derogatory to his laurels, even if the circumstance, had, had in it, less of the contrast and more of the comparison.

Comparison, indeed, with such a one, was out of the question, and as the nature of our talents, our dispositions, and pursuits, were no less different than the respective spheres in which we moved, in our journey of life, I am no ways inclined to make, far less desirous to court, any.

Yes! my conflicts, it will be seen, from what follows, however severe and arduous they have been, and however protracted in their duration, bear no resemblance or similitude whatever, to those of the personage above alluded to;—and, indeed, I am rather inclined to suspect, from various considerations, that some of them might have been too hard, upon Goldsmith's principles, for even the great hero of Waterloo himself.

There is one comfort, however, attendant on us who move humbly in the vale of life, with *limited* means, and, perhaps, abilities still more limited, viz., that if our means of doing

good to our fellow-creatures are more circumscribed than we could have wished, the same Providence which has limited to us, the means of virtue, has also, through the same cause, limited in us, the power to do mischief ; placing us in the state so happily expressed in Gray's elegy, whose words deserve to be stored up in our minds with grateful remembrance:—

“ Nor circumscribed alone  
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd.”

And, let it never be forgotten, that, although in the exercise of those important duties, which, as men, and as Christians, we are called on to perform, we must, in every situation of life, lay our account to be governed by circumstances, yet, we have not a hard taskmaster to deal with ; for we are taught in the beautiful parable of the talents, that, although no excuse, nor extenuation, will be held valid, from those who evince a disposition to abuse their talents, either by misapplication or concealment, our performances, nevertheless, will be expected to be only commensurate with, or in proportion to, our ability ; and that, “ it will be from those alone to whom much is given, that much shall be required,”—an idea which is beautifully expressed, in the lines that an amiable authoress has quoted as the motto to her *Popular Models*,\* and some of whose words, I have elsewhere noticed as deserving to be written in letters of gold†:—

“ Who does the best his circumstance allows,  
Does well, acts nobly,—angels could no more.”

Whether I have done, or rather, in all the various situations, positions, and conditions of life, in which I have been placed by Providence, in my now somewhat protracted pilgrimage, *endeavour'd to do*, the BEST my various and varying circumstances allowed, at the several times, is only known (for I would not trust to the decision of my own heart) to that Great Being, whose all-pervading glance, and heart-searching powers, enable him to see at once, not only our actions, with their most proximate and remote tendencies, but, the se-

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\* *Popular Models, or Impressive Warnings to the Sons and Daughters of Industry*, by Mrs Grant, late of Duthil.

† See my *Popular Philosophy*, Vol. I. p. 30.

cret motives, and, to human eyes, hidden springs, from which they proceed, stript of all vain show and false colouring. So that, in this matter, I must abide by the decision of that upright and impartial tribunal, which can neither be bribed by flattery, blinded by prejudice, nor deceived by appearances of any kind; and, it would be at once foolish and unbecoming in me, knowing, among the little things I do know, the imperfection that must cleave to my very best services, to expect, or anticipate, any other verdict than that of "an unprofitable servant," and one "who has, in *all things*, come short of the glory of God."

Done my *best*, indeed! Can I really lay my hand on my heart, and say, after a review of the retrospections I have recently been taking, through this LONG VISTA of sixty years, that I have embraced *every* favouring opportunity that came in my way,—availed myself of *every* promising circumstance that sprung up to forward me in my progress,—and hearkened to *every* call of humanity that sounded in my ear, in the way of presenting that most acceptable of all sacrifices to the Deity, the performing, next to my more pressing individual and relative duties, acts of beneficence and mercy, to my more numerous, although somewhat more distantly connected, brethren of mankind?

No! The *everys*, as well as the *bests*, I am afraid, must be sunk in the answer; and I must stand confessed at the bar of conscience, as willing to abide by, and to acquiesce in, the rectitude of the above-mentioned, and, as I must acknowledge, as it refers to me, just and impartial sentence.

But, that I have done, or, at least, have endeavoured to do, *something*, to enable me to emerge from the native obscurity of my birth;—that I have done *something* to make up for, or to supply the defects of my originally limited education;—that I have done *something* in furtherance of those wise and prudent maxims of industry, and the necessity of application to business, impressed upon my juvenile mind by the best of parents, to whose sage advices and wholesome admonitions, I still look back with reverence and gratitude;—that I have done *something*, consistent and in accordance with those advices, in the way of pushing myself forward in

the way of business, and making provision for myself and family, as well as in putting them in the way of providing for themselves, as they grew up;—That I have done *something* during the sun of prosperity and youth, a time most fitted for active exertion, in order to provide for myself a comfortable asylum, and the means of subsistence during the winter of life;—and, lastly, that I have done, and still am endeavouring to do, *something* to alleviate those misfortunes that have since overtaken me, to the disappointment of my too fondly indulged in, and sanguinely anticipated hopes, of having “my life of labour,” at last, “crowned with an age of ease,”—I think will hardly be disputed, by those, who know any thing of my history. And that I have endeavoured, while all these things were going on, to do *something* also, in course of my pilgrimage, towards bettering the condition of my species, and adding to the number of their comforts, according to the extent of my humble abilities and capacities, in accordance with the maxim of the benevolent Penn, “Do good with what thou hast, or it will do thee no good,”—I think, will not be denied by those who peruse these pages, although they do not, properly speaking, embrace those more early and prosperous periods of my life, when my few feeble, but more disinterested efforts that way, must have been chiefly attempted.

There were, however, certain matters of a more selfish, or, as it may be styled, a less disinterested nature, on account of their capabilities of being brought into operation, in course of my business, or, in the exercise of some one or other of my varied professions, in which, it occurred to me, I might be useful to my brethren of mankind; and as these, have engaged a good deal of my attention, in my Journey of Life, I shall again recur to the subject, and say something in regard to them, in my next chapter.

## CHAPTER III.

The Author, no friend to egotism.—Not inclined, however, to run into a contrary extreme, in order to avoid the imputation of it.—An old exemplar sets me the example of writing one's own Memoirs in the first person.—Other instances, or circumstances, in which, this individual may be considered in the light of my prototype.—Some important matters, in which we differ.—Certain matters, in which, the Sexagenarian conceived, that he might be useful to his brethren of mankind, in the way, or exercise, of his profession.—Varied circumstances under which he was enabled to do so.—Sundry respectable authorities quoted.—Old established adage.—Lord Bacon.—Pope's Man of Ross.—More important facts submitted.—First Printing Press in East Lothian, when, and by whom it was set up.—Great illuminating process, or the Book Trade, when, and by whom first established in Dunbar.—Anecdote illustrative of the indolence and ignorance of some of the natives, in those days.—Our Author's first circulating Library.—Great increase in a short time.—Early commencement of his, since long protracted, series of auctions.—A few instances of his early efforts, and successful attempts, in the publication, or canvassing line.—Melancholy thoughts suggested by the sight of one of his earliest subscription lists.—East Lothian distinguished by her early facilities and means of obtaining information.—Lamp of Lothian again lighted up.—More extensive attempts of the Sexagenarian to be useful in the way and exercise of his profession.—His cheap Tracts.—Cheap Magazine.—Monthly Monitor, or Philanthropic Museum.—Affecting History of Tom Bragwell.—Popular Philosophy.—Anticipated answer to a series of queries.—The Labourer's Repast, responsive to the Labourer's Welcome.—Great extent and diversified utility of the literary perambulations of the Sexagenarian.

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I AM no friend to egotism, but I should wish to know how, in a matter where one is engaged in writing his own history, or any particular part of his own history, a copious use of the pronoun *I* can well be avoided, without the danger of running into a contrary extreme, and so affording a display of affectation and prudery, which, even at the risk of the sneers of some of those little witlings, who do not take time or pains to consider, that it is not all egotism which they may have been taught to deem so, I am not inclined to do. And why should I, seeing that my highly respectable and worthy predecessor in the annals of bookselling Autobiography, the late Mr Hutton of Birmingham, whose example I once fol-

lowed before, upon a certain occasion, when viewing, at an early period of my life, the curiosities of London, has again set me the example ; with the remark, as he enters upon the task of writing a narrative of the circumstances of his, upon the whole, smoothly flowing, but, in some cases, eventful life, in allusion to the practice of those writers, who, “in speaking of themselves,” are accustomed, as he styles it, to appear in the *third* person—“I can see no reason why a man may not speak in the *first*, and use the simple letter I;” justly observing, “A raree showman may be allowed to speak through a puppet, but it is needless in an author.”

I said this gentleman has again set me the example ; but, in attending a little to his history, I see that, in more respects than either the one or the other of these alluded-to instances, this good man—and I am proud of having such an exemplar to refer to—may be considered in the light of my pattern or prototype. I only wish that I could have carried the comparison farther, and been enabled to say so, in regard to others.

Among the things in which, without any forced construction, we may be said to have agreed, I may mention, that Mr Hutton followed the profession of a bookseller in a provincial, or country town ; and so, it may be remarked, did I.—Mr Hutton, in getting acquainted with the various branches of his profession, and establishing himself in trade, had some pretty serious and formidable obstacles to encounter ; and so had I.—One particular branch, that of *the binding*, Mr Hutton seems to have acquired, by the sheer exercise of his natural talents, joined to a persevering attention to the operations of others, without serving, as the common phrase is, a moment of apprenticeship to it ; and, in regard to one other branch, that of *the printing*, so did I.—Mr Hutton, at last, by a proper use of his talents, and continued perseverance in industrious habits, arrived at the possession of a well established and very respectable business ; and, looking back to a period, at a no-very great distance from the present, in the *VISTA OF TIME*, may it not be said, with equal truth ; and so did I.—Mr Hutton has given ample demonstration to the world of his literary propensities, by the number and variety of his writings ; and so, have not I ?—Among the number

of his works which *he has* published, is there not "*A Journey to London*," written at an early period of his life? and, among the number of mine that *have not* been published, is there not, I may ask myself, *A Voyage*, undertaken at a very early period of mine, *to the same place*? And, lastly, did not Mr Hutton, at last, set about writing *his own Memoirs*, in the work above alluded to; and, can it be denied, while these pages are before my readers, that I have been engaged, of late, in a similar undertaking?

Did I follow up the comparison farther, I might be able to point out, perhaps, a dozen or so more of particulars, in which, the analogy might appear equally striking, but these must suffice for the present, and I only wish that, in the few instances I am about to state, the similitude could have been still kept up; but here, alas! the resemblance drops;—for, if the latter years of this worthy individual must have passed with comparative serenity, in consequence of the unclouded state, and general prosperity of his affairs, such surely cannot be said of mine, or these Latter Struggles would not have seen the light.—If it may be said of him, that he must have enjoyed a pretty robust and green old age at the years of three score, or he could not, on surviving the frosts of so many winters, afterwards have written down, on the eighty-ninth anniversary of his birth, "This day, (October 11th,) is my birth-day. I enter upon my ninetieth year, and have walked ten miles!" such, certainly, cannot be said of the writer of this, who had long, and often, been reminded, before he had arrived at the first-mentioned period, that the odds lay much against him, that he should never see the latter;—and if, at the conclusion of HIS drama, and winding up of the variegated tale of this finally prosperous and highly respected individual, it may have been truly said, that his latter end was better than the beginning; such, surely, as yet, cannot be said of me, or my present, or late appeal, would not have come before the public; nor should I, at such a late hour of my day, as will by and by appear, have been obliged to begin the world again, and to toil once more at the oar of life, at a time, and under circumstances, when it would have been so highly desirable otherwise to have retired from its

labours and pursuits. But, although wishing, in these respects, must be vain, and hopes, as I have often found them, may turn out deceitful, I cannot forbear, before parting with this worthy brother of the profession, from joining cordially in the wish and hope, expressed by the Reviewer of "The Life of William Hutton," in the supplementary number to the forty-second volume of the Monthly Magazine, in the short notice prefixed to that review, viz., "for our parts, we have accompanied our old friend, in this narrative of his peaceful journey of life, with heartfelt pleasure; and our deliberate feeling is, a fervent wish that our latter days may be like his, and that, when our race against time is ended, we may possess equal claims to the respect of posterity."

In order to avoid giving offence, as much as possible, to critics of the description above alluded to, at the time I lately published my somewhat lengthy prospectus, I adopted, in accordance with the plan so usually had recourse to by others, as a model of my style, that of my old school-companion of the *Commentaries*, and addressed my readers in that prospectus, almost from beginning to end, in the *third* person.

To that plan, it may here be seen, I do not now mean much to adhere, although I may occasionally, and as it suits my purpose, recur to it, as in the present chapter, I shall be found to deviate from both methods; and, in a great degree, in preference to either, have recourse to what may rather be called the interrogatory way of going to work; which, if it has nothing else, will have, at least, the charm of variety to recommend it.

To return, therefore, from this digression, and take up the thread of my subject where I left it, towards the conclusion of my last chapter, with the remark that there were certain matters, in which, from certain circumstances, it occurred to me, I might be useful to my brethren of mankind, in the way of prosecuting my other duties, and in the exercise of my profession, to which I meant again to recur in the present; I shall now proceed to do so, and show, agreeably to the manner and method above alluded to, how, consistently with the interests of my business otherwise, or rather, in the way of forwarding these interests, I contrived to do good to others



and to myself, at the same time ; and, particularly, to promote the moral and mental amelioration of my species, to a certain extent, while my own individual interests, in the fair exercise of my profession, were not neglected nor forgotten.

If there is any truth in the adage, then, that " He who makes a tree to grow, or a blade of grass to spring up, where never tree grew, nor blade of grass sprung up before," ought to be considered among the benefactors of his kind ;—If there was any solidity in the reasoning of Lord Bacon, when he says, " If a man perform that which hath not been attempted before, or attempted and given over, or hath been achieved, but not with as good circumstance, he shall purchase more honour than by affecting a matter of greater difficulty, or virtue, wherein he is but a follower ;"\*—If there was any well grounded foundation for the grateful plaudits, in which each lisping babe had been taught by Pope, to respond to the praises of the " Man of Ross," for the amelioration and improvements, which that worthy and meritorious individual (whose praises are sung more largely in the October number for 1814, of the Cheap Magazine,) had so largely contributed to, out of his limited income ;—If there is much truth, indeed, in the maxim, that " it is better to prevent crimes than to punish them,"—that it is a more laudable and praiseworthy employment to endeavour, as much as in us lies, to remove the films of ignorance, of prejudice, and of error, from the human mind, than, from any motive whatever, to lend our aid to rivet them more closely, and flatter and encourage men in their delusions ;—In short, if it may be accounted a far more noble, and rational, and enduring ambition, to seek for glory, honour, and immortality, in a continued and persevering course of well-doing, and a long protracted series of acts of utility and kindness to our brethren of mankind, according to the means and abilities with which Providence has entrusted us, than, to seek for preferment, and a short-lived renown, by a contrary conduct ; to be imbittered for the present, it may be, by reflections of a no very pleasing description, and most assuredly to

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\* See Bacon's Essay on Honour and Reputation.

be followed by the execrations of posterity, and the lasting curses of injured humanity. If there is any meaning in all these, may not the Sexagenarian, who puts the questions, humbly hope, that he may be permitted to lay in his claim for a small share of the meed of praise, or, at least, the approbation of the natives, should he be able to establish to their satisfaction, by the same method of reasoning, the following facts, which, indeed, he most willingly submits to their just and impartial decision.

Who was it, he would say to the residents in his more immediate neighbourhood, that not only first planted that useful tree, the PRINTING PRESS, on our native soil,\* but who, for so many years afterwards, gave that potent and mighty engine for weal, or for woe, according as its energies are properly or improperly directed, a direction and impulse in such a way, as to call down upon his exertions, from time to time, those numerous and highly respectable encomiums, —very slender specimens of which can only be given in these pages ?†

Who was it, he would say, that first established that great and wonderfully illuminating process, the Book Trade, in Dunbar (after the short experiment of another person had been tried, and had failed), upon any thing like a permanent foundation, now more than *forty* years ago, and that, at a time, when such a thing was so much wanted in this quarter of the county,‡—laying in his native town, at that early

\* The first Printing Press erected in the County of East Lothian, was that set up by me in Dunbar, in 1795, and which, for reasons that it may not be difficult to guess, was afterwards removed to Haddington, being the county town.

† These specimens, in order not to run out this chapter to an undue length, must be brought in afterwards, in such a way, and at such places, as may be found suitable for them.

‡ My predecessor, Mr Smart's, stay in Dunbar was very short, he having come to it, I should imagine, some time after the commencement of the *Eighties*, and leaving it again, altogether, at the term of Whitsunday, 1788. Previous to his time, the mental wants of the lieges, had been supplied in the same manner as some of our neighbouring county villages are at present, by the merchants, or dealers in other articles ; but I do not think, that my father, who was one of them, entered much into the bookselling way, until the time of the *short interregnum*, betwixt Mr S.'s leaving the town and my being capable of supplying his place, during which time he would, no doubt, do what

period, the foundation of that useful reservoir for accumulating, and copious source for diffusing, the means of knowledge and useful information, throughout the adjoining parishes, which, at no great distance of time afterwards, viz., in the year 1809, had increased, or, rather, been augmented, to the amazing extent for a country collection, in a small country town, of "*upwards of three thousand five hundred volumes!*" under the name of "THE DUNBAR AND COUNTRY CIRCULATING LIBRARY;"\* and opening up, otherwise, those many irrigating streams of mental improvement, in the shape of his numerous auctions;†—his strenuous, persevering, and successful endeavours in soliciting and obtaining subscriptions for works of real and permanent utility,‡ which has been the

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he could, by keeping up a supply of the more saleable articles, to keep the place (for that seemed to have been a favourite object with him) open for me.—As an evidence, how far some of our merchants, in these days, required a little more general information themselves, as well as the indolent manner in which (no doubt, partly for want of books) they spent their time, I shall relate an anecdote which, it is likely, some of my readers may have heard before, viz., that, when a certain merchant heard some person talking of "Hervey's Works," which, at that time, must have been much known, and held in very general estimation, as they have long been since, he hastily, and rather pettishly replied,—“Hervey's Works! I never knew him do any thing but sit on the *blue stone* at his door, all his life,”—meaning, thereby, old John Harvey, who kept shop under, I believe, figure 4, in that house immediately adjoining the Manse, on the north side, where it still remains; but what has become of the *blue stone*, or whether it is still to be found on the spot, I know not.

\* I see that we opened our first Circulating Library, with a Catalogue, printed by Mr John Taylor of Berwick-upon-Tweed, under the firm of J. & G. Miller, on the 20th November, 1789; but, the first catalogue printed on my own account, was that published in October 1791, and is what I mean as more particularly referring to, as above.

This catalogue was, upon the whole, pretty respectable to begin with, and which had, indeed, increased, by the winter of 1809, to the number above-mentioned. There can be no doubt, as to this point, for I have a copy of the catalogue still in my possession, which I shall be ready to show to any lady or gentleman, who wishes to be informed, as to the nature of a selection, from which every thing of an indelicate nature, or immoral tendency, in as far as they could be ascertained, were carefully excluded.

† My auctions in the country, I see by my reminiscences, commenced so early as September 1791, and having been continued occasionally ever since, almost down to the present period, or so long as I continued in the book trade, the inhabitants of our neighbouring, and more remote, villages, scattered over the country, must have, all along, been supplied with a plentiful treat of mental food, and that of the most useful and wholesome, as well as varied description, to suit all tastes and fancies, at a cheap and easy rate.

‡ Of this, I shall produce one instance that will, no doubt, astonish some of my friends, among the present race of country booksellers, as it did, at the

means of carrying the blessings of general and useful knowledge, at a cheap and easy rate, to the most obscure cottage and hamlet in the county, making East Lothian, distinguished among the surrounding districts, for her superior facilities and means of obtaining information; and that, long before itinerating libraries had been heard of among its inhabitants, or, the business of canvassing had, as it now is, been reduced to a profession;—giving to the county of his birth, a place she had never before enjoyed, in the annals of literature, and lighting up, once more, *the Lamp of Lothian*,\* in a manner very different from that in which it had been wont to shine, in the now venerable, but then venerated and hallowed fane, of our provincial capital, in the more benighted, superstitious, and less enquiring days of our forefathers?—Who was it, he would farther say, that followed up these

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time, no less a personage than that great and enterprising bookseller, Mr Constable himself, viz., that the writer of this, who must, at that period, 1805, &c., have been in the hey-day of exertion, and youthful ardour, got from the publishers, first Mr Thomson Bonar, and more latterly Messrs A. Constable, & Co., no less a quantity than *forty-two* of the large, and *seventy-six* of the small paper copies, being 118 in all, of Forsyth's *Beauties of Scotland*!—not a bad number for a country sale, when it is considered, that the large paper copy retailed at *Five Guineas*, and the small at *Three Pounds Fifteen Shillings*, and yet the whole, while in course of publication, were almost all subscribed for.

But this is only one instance of his success in the way of selling books in parts and by numbers, a business almost unknown, or, at least, very little practised by others, in those days; for, were old Mr Taylor of Berwick, alive to testify, he would, no doubt, express his surprise, at the astonishing number of his Ostervald's Bible, for which also, the writer procured subscribers, while the edition 1790 was in course of issuing from the press.—Of Knox's *History of the Reformation*, published by Mr Hugh Inglis, West Port, Edinburgh, at the time I commenced business, or rather previous to my having commenced on my own account, I see, by a list of subscribers' names still in my possession, I also sold, the goodly number of nearly *four score* of copies. But the looking over that list, dated 28th October, 1790, makes me melancholy to think, how few of that number now remain, who, at that time, “kept the world awake,” if not “with lustre,” at least with useful exertion, and “with noise.”

I do not mention those numbers as any way surprising in these days, when the number trade is so extensively cultivated, and the canvassing business so much followed after; but let any one look back to *my situation*, and *the times* I then lived in, and then form his ideas of the importance, or non-importance of the transactions here recorded.

\* “The Church of the Franciscans, in Haddington, was, in 1355, so magnificent, that,” we are told by Fordun and John Major, “it was styled *Lucerna Laudonæ*, THE LAMP OF LOTHIAN, from the lamps kept constantly burning in it, which rendered it visible at a great distance during the night.”

more local and circumscribed operations, by that more excursive and enlarged attempt to be useful, in the means that Providence still continued to augment, and put in his power, in the way of his profession, by the multitudinous host of *CHEAP TRACTS*, *upwards of a hundred thousand in number*, that issued from the Dunbar press, in 1802-3, near the beginning of the present century, or about *thirty* years ago?—The far known, and still more widely extended *CHEAP MAGAZINE*, that emanated from the Haddington press, in 1813 and 1814, the prospectus for which, I see by the date of the circular now before me, (July 27, 1812,) made its appearance, just *twenty* years ago;—*THE MONTHLY MONITOR, OR PHILANTHROPIC MUSEUM*, which followed in its wake, and may be considered in the light of a continuation of that work, in 1815;—and the new modelled and improved edition of “*The Affecting History of Tom Bragwell*,” that appeared at a time, when, as will be seen by the testimony hereafter to be adduced, it was so much wanted, towards the close of 1821, being nearly the end of another decade, or a little more than *ten* years from the period in which I now write;—all of which, it will be observed, having the same object in view, the prevention of crime, and the consequent peace, comfort, security, and happiness of society?

And Who, it may be still farther asked, was it, that, when the minds of his brethren in the humbler classes of society, had taken such a praiseworthy direction, in the growing taste which was beginning to prevail among them for scientific information, and a craving for, that most sublime and noble of all pursuits, the studies of nature, and a thirst for the knowledge of the wonders and beauties of creation—Who was it, he would say, that appeared once more on the stage of literature, but a few years since, in the pages of his *POPULAR PHILOSOPHY*, in which, it will be seen, his efforts were not wanting, by taking advantage of the current that had so happily set in, and endeavouring, to the utmost extent of his abilities, to draw the attention of his juvenile readers, from the sublimities and mysteries of the things that are seen, to the *GREAT UNSEEN*, within the veil,—that Great Mind, from

whence all our knowledge emanates—from Nature, up to Nature's God ?

To all these several queries, he humbly conceives there will be but one answer, and that answer, he confidently hopes, will be in favour of the Sexagenarian.

It must, therefore, be abundantly evident, that, although the writer of this has not, like one of his contemporaries that he formerly alluded to, astounded the nations with the shouts of his triumphs, and the noise of his victories—that, although he has not, like another that might have been mentioned, made the tables of the great groan beneath the weight of his literary feasts, or made himself any way conspicuous, as a caterer for the amusement of the rich—that, although, like a third, whom he might also have mentioned, he may never have set the little circle in the poor man's cottage in a roar, by the piquancy of his wit, or comicality of his jests, or made them draw more close to the fireside, by the horrors of some terrific imaginary detail ; yet, he too, it must be observed, has made some little noise in the prosecution of the otherwise, almost “ noiseless tenor of his way” in the world. That he too, has contributed something to the “ Welcome Repast” of the humble labourer,—and that, there is some reason to believe, that many a little circle in the more lowly dwellings of men, have been at once amused and benefited by his efforts.

Indeed, the communication of “ A Labourer, and Constant Reader,” the post mark of which bears witness that it came from the place from which it is dated, viz., at Annan, 11th October, 1813, is an evidence of this, as may be learned from the first eight lines of this homely, but pithy address, to the Editor, under the head of “ The Labourer's Repast ; or, the Cheap Magazine,” not having room to copy more of a production, which certainly does no less honour to the discriminating powers, than to the poetical abilities of the writer :—

“ With infinite pleasure, your work I survey,  
And earnestly wish it may last ;  
After bearing the burden, and heat of the day,  
I haste to the welcome repast.

" The welfare and care of the humble in life,  
In your present endeavours are seen ;  
In a Cor, far removed from tumult and strife,  
I muse on your Cheap Magazine !"

It was, at the commencement of that work, that I had adopted as my motto, under the very appropriate cut which accompanies it—"Yonder comes the labourer. He has borne the burden and heat of the day : the descending sun has relieved him from his toil, and he is hastening home to enjoy repose.—Inhabitant of the lowly dwelling, who can be indifferent to thy comfort ?"—How pleasant to have it thus responded to, by the labourer himself, before the end of the year, in which this motto made its appearance,—and, in good time, to be inserted in the same volume that contained the other.

Many, indeed, is the cottage, and the village, as well as obscure hamlet, and much frequented market town, which the Sexagenarian, who now addresses his reader, has visited and had access to, in course of his literary perambulations—from Tweedside to the Banks of the Ayr—and from Kirkmaiden and the shores of the Fleet, to the country in the neighbourhood of John-o'-Groats, in Caithness.

And, as it may be difficult to point out a locality, or situation, among the romantic glens, or towering mountains—the heathery hills, or long withdrawing fertile vales, in all this extensive district, comprehending, we may say, the whole of the northern division of our island, where his name, or his exertions have not been heard of—so it may be no less so, over all the surface of so wide an extent, to meet with, any grade or description of persons, from the cottage to the palace—the inhabitant of the lofty dwelling to him of the princely mansion—who has not, in one way or other, either directly or indirectly, been benefited, or has profited by his labours.

## CHAPTER IV.

The subject continued.—How I am borne out, in my assertions towards the conclusion of my last chapter.—The absurdity of one's not availing himself of such evidence.—A single specimen, or testimonial, in behalf of sundry of my performances, can only here be adduced.—A saying of Solomon's rightly interpreted.—My Cheap Tracts, of too temporary or evanescent a nature, to attract the notice of criticism.—Their general and individual titles enumerated.—My original motives for bringing them out.—Happy result, in the altered complexion of the contents of the hawker's basket.—One melancholy reminiscence attending the consideration of these tracts.—Other efforts, or fields of exertion.—Highly respectable testimonials as to the manner in which I executed my labours in them.—Each of the testimonials refers, more or less, to the author's most widely extended publication, the Cheap Magazine.—Reasons why, on the present occasion, the Sexagenarian should acknowledge himself, as not only the original and sole projector and editor, but the author, of several of the leading papers, &c., in that work.—The Cheap Magazine characterized, by the Editor of the Philanthropist, as the commencement of a new era.—Its great circulation, as evidenced by the extent of its impression.—Noticed with approbation, and kindly expressed wish to promote its sale, by Mr Wilberforce.—A few leading articles, of which, the Sexagenarian was the author, noticed.

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THIS is saying a great deal, and would, indeed, be saying far too much, were it not, so far as it respects four of the particulars, the mere repetition, or echo, of evidence, which it would be the extremity of prudery not to avail myself of, on the present occasion, as it will be seen, from the single specimen of each (all that my limits permit me to make room for), that, that evidence is very foreign from my own. For, although Solomon says, "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips," he says nothing, in all his writings, so far as I am aware, to dissuade us from availing ourselves of the encomiums of others; a principle, that would equally militate against the *young man*, going forth on his entrance into life, with testimonials of an introductory nature in his pocket from those who know something about him, as against the *old man*, who has occasion to refer to those who know something about his previous character and ability, for their opinions, as a passport to the attention, or sympathy, of the public, on any after occasion.



I said, as respects *four* of the particulars ;—for, in regard to my CHEAP TRACTS, or *Cheap Cracks*, as *Old Mrs Murray* of Whitekirk, used to say to her gude *old gudeman*, when they were toasting themselves before the fire, previous to going to bed, on a winter night, at the time of publication, now more than thirty years ago, “Come, Willie, ha’e ye no got ony o’ thae cheap cracks the night”—they were of too humble and evanescent a nature, as they severally made their appearance, to attract the notice of criticism of any kind, and they were too soon exchanged, or disposed of in wholesale to the booksellers, (in order to reach their ulterior destination, the hawker’s basket,) in my annual *raids* up through Teviotdale, as Sir Walter Scott would have called them, and elsewhere, *round*, by Dumfries, and Kirkcudbright, and Ayrshire, and Lanarkshire, and Stirling and Linlithgowshires ; and in, by our northern metropolis and intervening towns and villages on my way home,—to give me any great concern whether they were so noticed, or not. Yet, it may be necessary, for the information of my younger readers, and to give them an idea of the nature and tendency of these tracts, that I should just briefly state the several individual, or distinguishing titles of each, as well as the general one which runs through the whole—as it may be, to repeat to my more aged contemporaries, the motives and inducements I had, at the time, for giving them to the world, before appealing to their own experience, as to how far my conduct was praiseworthy on the occasion, under the circumstances in which I went to work in breaking ground, that never, in such a manner, had been broken before, and to what extent my intentions and anticipations have been gratified in the result.

In regard to the first, in order to save room, of which, I find, I shall have little to lose by the time I have done, I shall subjoin the individual titles, as below, by the way of a note, just premising, in the text, that the general title which ran through the whole series at top, was, “Cheap Tracts, calculated to promote the interests of Religion, Virtue, and Humanity,” and bearing the usual imprint at bottom,—“Dunbar ; printed by G. Miller,” &c., &c., this being in

the infancy of my printing business, and previous to that establishment being removed to Haddington.\*

I need scarcely remind my more aged contemporaries, that my avowed motive, at the time, for bringing out that multitudinous host of Tracts in so cheap and humble a form, was, in order to counteract the dangerous tendency of that noxious description, which were then so abundantly scattered about the country, through the medium of what has been so emphatically styled, *that copious source of mischief*, THE HAWKER'S BASKET; and those who will take the trouble of recollecting the Lothian Toms, the John Cheap's, the Wise Willies, and other pernicious trash, which I shall not pollute my pages by naming, and compare them with the substitutes I had been at so much pains to put in their place, I trust, will do me the justice to say, that my motives were good—while, the result of the scheme, in the altered complexion, the contents of that mode of conveyance assumed soon after, and the facilities it must have afforded for furnishing the children of the cotter, with a more wholesome, and very different

\* Names of the Twenty kinds of Cheap Tracts, printed and published by G. Miller, Dunbar, in 1802 and 1803 :—

1. The Magdalen, or the History of a Reformed Prostitute.
2. Maria; or the Wanderer Reclaimed, and the Fatal Effects of Guilty Love.
3. The Slave Trade.
4. The Generous Libertine, &c.
5. Counsels to Young Men.
6. Serious Thoughts for the Living.
7. Reflections among the Monuments.
8. Moral Tales.
9. The Drunken Husband; or the Fatal Effects of Drunkenness, and the Magnanimous Englishman.
10. True Humanity usefully exerted, &c.
11. The Death-bed, and the Murmur corrected.
12. Tales of Instruction, in Verse and Prose.
13. An Affecting History of an Innkeeper in Normandy.
14. The Honest Debtor, or the Virtuous Man struggling with, rising superior to, and overcoming Misfortune.
15. Short Stories for Little Folks.
16. The power of Affection illustrated by examples.
17. The Little Fabulist, or Select Fables from Dodsley,
18. The Instructor, containing Reflections and Maxims, for the Conduct of Life, &c.
19. An Antidote to Superstition; or a Cure for those Weak Minds which are troubled with the fear of Ghosts, Witches, &c.
20. An Evening Walk, with suitable Reflections, Motives of Piety, and Virtue, &c., &c.

kind of food from what they had previously been accustomed to, is the best proof that can be adduced, that it was well calculated to answer the purpose originally intended. Even that comparatively harmless production, "The Laird of Cool's Ghost," at one time a great favourite in this neighbourhood, in consequence of, its, being represented in *the tract*, as the theatre of the repeated appearances of the unearthly visitor, seems to have entirely vanished at the Crowing of the Cock, in No. 19; and the Witty Sayings of George Buchanan, have sunk, in the estimation of the more intelligent young men of latter times, before the far more rational entertainment to be derived from, that most excellent series of "Counsels to Young Men," in No. 5.

There is one melancholy reminiscence attending the consideration of *these Tracts*. Ah! little did I think, when I introduced into the selection, the story of Oliver Salvary, in No. 14, that I was introducing to my customers the story of one, who might, in course of a few years afterwards, be considered in the light of a kind of prototype to myself! for, I question much, if the noble-minded Oliver, by the time I have concluded my present task, shall be considered as having done more, in a foreign country, to retrieve his affairs, than I have done, and am still endeavouring to do, to overcome my misfortunes, at home. But, alas! Oliver had youth and strength, and sanguine hope, to suport and bear him up, on his side, which, I need not tell my readers, in this stage of my exertions, I have not. He, at the age of *thirty-five*, looked forward, to *fifteen* years labour, as sufficient to put him to rights again,—I, at the age of more than *sixty*, have to look back, to *fifteen* years labour in vain.

In regard to the other four fields of exertion, in which I have made some endeavour to labour for the good of my brethren, while my own individual interests, and those of my family, in the way of my profession, were not forgotten, as I observed before, a single testimonial, respecting the utility of, and the manner in which I have executed, my task in each, is all that I can now make room for: And first, as respects **THE CHEAP MAGAZINE**, I shall introduce the opinion of the Editor of that highly respectable London periodical, "THE

PHILANTHROPIST; or, Repository for Hints and Suggestions, calculated to promote the Comfort and Happiness of Man;" who, in course of a long, and rather flattering review (consisting of no less than seven closely printed octavo pages), in the number for July, 1814, is pleased to express himself, in allusion to that work, as follows:—

"This work, which now engages our attention, is a commencement (we hope) of such a series of publications, for the instruction of the more numerous classes, as will convince all men, who really have the good of the people at heart, that, notwithstanding the state of THE PRESS, which no man laments more deeply than we do, it is yet possible, by means of that press, to be of infinite service to a reading people. This commencement is emphatically a new era. It marks one of the most important steps in the progress of human improvement. Almost all the dispositions and habits in the lower orders, which are of most importance to their own happiness, and to the prosperity of society, are here inculcated, and skilfully inculcated, by Precepts, by Stories, by Anecdotes, by short Biographical Sketches; in short, by every expedient which appears best adapted to entice to the reading, and to produce a deep impression by that which is read. There is no small literary talent, as well as good judgment and right feeling, displayed in the conduct of this part of the work. It may be read with pleasure even by the most cultivated; and contains nothing but what is, at the same time, accommodated to the apprehension of the most unlearned."

In reference to my next work, "THE MONTHLY MONITOR, OR PHILANTHROPIC MUSEUM," although it is conjoined with its predecessor, (to both of which the writer of this stood in the same relation,) the amiable authoress of "*Intellectual Education*," and "*Popular Models, and Impressive Warnings for the Sons and Daughters of Industry*," in the concluding note to the second volume of the latter, observes—

"The writer would be deficient in zeal for the cause of plebeian instruction, were she to omit recommending the 'Cheap Magazine,' and 'Monthly Monitor;' works highly approved by the most competent judges, and so low priced, as to be within the reach of the lowest class. Perhaps so

much valuable religious and moral truth, or such variety of economical information, never has been disseminated at such moderate expense. The writer has no acquaintance, nor connection with the Editor of these productions, nor would she take upon herself to speak so decidedly in their favour, if very able pens had not sanctioned her opinion."

The verdict in favour of the "*AFFECTING HISTORY OF TOM BRAGWELL*," will be taken from the *Christian Instructor*, for February, 1815, being soon after, the little work in question, made its appearance, and at the time, the very respectable periodical from which the quotation is taken, was under the editorship of the Rev. Dr Andrew Thomson. It is to the following purport:—

"This is the history of an unhappy young man, who was cut off for his crimes, in the morning of his days. It strikingly delineates the rise, progress, and final termination of juvenile delinquency; and affords an excellent counteraction to the deleterious poison which has been extensively circulated in that ill-advised publication, known by the name of 'the Memoirs of David Haggart.' We would humbly, but earnestly recommend the present work, as highly deserving the serious attention, not only of youth, for whom it is particularly designed, but also of all parents, guardians, teachers, masters, and heads of families, who feel themselves interested in checking the first approaches to vice in the rising generation, from a principle of humanity, and regard to the axiom, that it is *better to prevent crimes than to punish them*. The first edition of the story appeared in a very useful periodical work, published at Haddington several years ago, under the name of the '*Cheap Magazine*,'—a valuable repository of important information, and moral and religious instruction. In the increase and circulation of all such works, we most sincerely rejoice, as most important helps in the cause of religion and morals, and among the best friends of our country's best interests. Let the rich and the powerful of our day employ their influence and money to scatter such good seed among the people; and let *clerical superintendents* of ability, piety, and zeal, be encouraged, and warmly patronised, and we augur more real and lasting good, than from all the en-

actments of criminal jurisprudence, and all the declamations of affected loyalty. Statutes are necessary, and declarations of loyalty are also necessary ; but let not our reliance on *words* and on *paper*, make us practically forget, the oft repeated watchword of our departed hero—‘ Britain expects that every man will do his duty.’ ”

In regard to my last published work of “POPULAR PHILOSOPHY,” the testimonials being so numerous as to be more than sufficient to fill a sheet of themselves, it may be difficult to select *one*, without doing seeming injustice to the others, but, as, bearing more particularly upon the question, as to the greater utility of the publication, in consequence of its *timely* appearance, and peculiar adaptation to the complexion and circumstances of the times, I shall venture to select this one specimen, without, however, the smallest prejudice in my estimation of the others, in the following extract from No. 22 of the printed testimonials, being from the pen of the Rev. James Thomson, one of the present Ministers of Dundee, who, in a letter to the author, dated 5th March, 1827, is pleased to express himself in the following terms :—

“The advancement of learning and science, among all classes of the community, is one of the wonderful features of our age; and deserves the highest encouragement from all who would promote the best interests of society. But although knowledge is power; yet power is only desirable when it is wisely directed; and excepting when it is under the controul of religious principle, it is always liable to be abused. Now, your ‘*Popular Philosophy*,’ seems to be a most suitable treatise to be put into the hands of those, whose minds have undergone a partial, and defective, course of intellectual culture, only, as an antidote to the dangers into which persons of that description are apt to run. The very best philosophy is that contained in the Bible, and of this you have very skilfully availed yourself. If I had influence, I would recommend to the patrons of Mechanics’ Institutions, to encourage those who are under their care, to procure for themselves, a book, at once so full of important facts, and so well calculated to afford them religious and moral instruction. But, indeed, I know no class of readers to whom this valuable

little work may not be, with propriety, recommended. To those who may have no other means of instruction on the subjects of which it treats, it affords no inconsiderable advantages; others it might stimulate to a diligent improvement of their superior advantages; and even the most learned may derive from it much fresh instruction and pleasure. Viewing this recent production, in connexion with your former popular work, the *Cheap Magazine*, you are entitled to be regarded as contributing largely to the innocent amusement, and to the instruction of multitudes. Wishing you every success in your very meritorious undertakings, I am," &c.

It will be observed, that, in each of the three latter notices, although meant more exclusively, to speak to the merits and tendency, of three other distinct and separate publications, what may be termed the great, and most extensively known, work of the writer, "The Cheap Magazine," has been brought prominently into view; and, as this work has been so particularly distinguished, as "the commencement of a new era—as marking one of the most important steps in the progress of human improvement," by a man ranking so high in the annals of philanthropy, as the editor of the work formerly alluded to; \*—has had so wide and extensive circulation among the dwellings of men; †—has been so much approved of by a character so long known, and so justly esteemed, by the religious and humane world, as the new venerable Mr Wilberforce, as to make him express a wish, in a letter to the Editor, which will be afterwards noticed, to give it more publicity, by promoting its sale in his "part of the Island;"

\* So high, indeed, not to mention his name here, out of respect to his delicacy, it may be sufficient to state, that, it is of this amiable and respected individual, and now *long tried*, friend of humanity, the *Edinburgh Review*, for August, 1820, speaks, when it says, "He is a man almost without parallel, for genuine philanthropy, in an age of benevolence."

† Of this, there can be no better proof, than the extent of the impression of the first Number, of which there were printed, at different periods, but mostly, if not all, within the year, upwards of *Twenty-one Thousand copies*! This was assuredly no small undertaking, although the work itself was designated on the title, as being of "humble import," for a single, unsupported individual, considering the *then* limited extent, to which periodicals usually ran, and the comparative obstacles such a work had, in those days, (when the facilities of carriage, and other matters, were not as they are now,) to encounter.

—and its merits seem, otherwise, to have been so fully appreciated by others very competent to decide—it may be unnecessary, for the Sexagenarian who now addresses his readers, to say more than he has already said, in order to establish the positions, upon which he set out, in regard to the universality of his acquaintance, and the claims he may have on the sympathy of the public, in consequence of the general utility of his undertakings, than by acknowledging himself, as he here does, in the most unqualified and unreserved manner, not only the original and sole projector and editor, but the author of several of its leading papers, and smaller pieces,\* as well as the printer and publisher, the seller and distributor of that work; to say nothing more, in this place, of the other productions that have, from time to time, appeared as the fruits of his editorial labours, although, in fact, also emanating from his own pen, all proceeding from the same unison of design, and breathing to mankind, the same spirit.

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\* Of the former of these, I shall only mention "The Beacon, or the Execution Improved," in the first Number of the first, and afterwards continued in the second, volume, under the heads of "The Beacon in a blaze again"—"the Fiery Cross," and "the Execution,"—all of which were afterwards wrought up, and given to the world, in the "Affecting History of Tom Bragwell;—and the "Book of Nature laid open," which will be found, in separate pieces, under their appropriate heads, to have run through the whole of the thirteen Numbers of the second volume, and which were, in fact, the ground-work, or original, upon which the Author has since raised his more enlarged superstructure of "Popular Philosophy," as may be seen, without farther comparison, by the following extract of a letter, from the Rev. Dr Burns of Paisley, to the Author, soon after the work made its appearance in its new shape:—"A work, *the tendency* of which, I cordially approve, and the *execution* of which appears to me singularly successful. The first sketch of the work, I had read with great interest, many years ago, in the pages of the Cheap Magazine, and I rejoice to think that you have been enabled to expand it so fully, and to put it into such an interesting dress for all, but especially for the young." Upon the smaller pieces, it would be rather incompatible with my limits, to enter at present.



## CHAPTER V.

The Author, in midst of other concerns, not unmindful or remiss in his other duties.—His accordance in the opinion of the Apostle, that, "if any would not work, neither should he eat."—His consequent early habits of industry, and application to business.—Corroborating proof of this.—Receives a well-timed, practical lesson, on his entrance into trade.—It is an ill wind that blows nobody good.—Industrious habits of the Author no way abated, as he gets forward in the world.—A proof of this in the strange remark of a rather strange man.—Narrow escape from dying in earnest, the supposed effect of over exertion.—A certain adage not quite applicable in his case.—Gradual, and step by step, advances in the extension of my business.—One, and my first, great object accomplished, before I turned my attention to other matters.—First of my more extensive business journies, when it took place.—Reminiscences of some old acquaintances in the book trade.—Adventure at Carlisle.—Reflection at Longtown.—When, and where, my first wholesale sale to the trade took place.—Hanging feast.—Allusion to a melancholy and mournful event, followed by an affecting, but gratifying testimonial.—An old friend makes preparations to leave me.—Another help casts up.—Twice successful in the lottery of matrimony.—How the married state may be rendered *less* a lottery.—Circumstances conspire to induce me, to remove my printing establishment to the county town.—Increasing, and increased, state of business afterwards.—Confident, but affecting appeal, to my early acquaintances, in the way of business.—Have had my *ups* as well as my *downs* in life.—Reasonableness and propriety, in consequence, of one of my mottos.—Other matters, more properly reserved for after consideration.

It is not to be inferred, however, from the circumstance of my having devoted *part* of my time, at different intervals, to the more generous, or less "generous, concern for the good of mankind," which, in accordance with the opinion of Addison, I have ever considered as one of the characteristics that *should* "denominate men great and glorious," that I was, in consequence, any way negligent or remiss, of my individual and family duties.

There is no part of the Apostolical writings, to which I have always given my more cordial assent, than that in which, conjointly with his fellow labourers, he reminds the Thessalonians, that "if any would not work, neither should he eat," as well as to the doctrine implied in the passage in which he observes to Timothy, "but if any provide not for his own,

and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel,"—meaning, no doubt, those of his family, who were incapacitated by youth, age, infirmity, or other natural disability, or unavoidable circumstance, from providing, according to the Apostle's first aphorism, for themselves; and hence, may be accounted for, those early habits of industry and application, arising out of my family wants, and dependent situation, which seem to have attracted, at a very early period, the attention of a very shrewd and intelligent, as well as, in other respects, most worthy gentleman, with whom I had early transactions in the way of business, to such a degree, (although unknown to me at the time, and indeed for a long time after,) as to have induced him to recommend my conduct in these respects, as a model for imitation by his own son, the young gentleman who is now his successor in business, and from whom, I have only learned the circumstance within these few years.

Indeed, I needed not either the prudent injunctions of a revered parent—the pithy sayings in the Proverbs of Solomon—or the full-of-meaning advice of the author of Poor Richard, in his far-famed Almanack, "Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee,"—to give my mind a particular bias that way; for, I had a most striking practical lesson given me, on my entrance into trade, in the conduct and fate, of my predecessor in the shop I first occupied, who, having come to a fortune before, as the saying is, he had wit to guide it, opened shop, and went out with his horse and his hounds, it may be said, on the same day, leaving *his man John* to attend at the back of the counter, by which means, in a short time, he distanced the concerns of the *shop* and of *John*, so far, as to leave, his ill-fated assistant, with *no shop to keep*; but to me, a very opportune opening, and a more commodiously fitted up shop, than I would likely, have been otherwise put in possession of at the time, without considerable outlay of expense—so that, in this respect, I might well say, "It is an ill wind that blows nobody good;" for, by poor Mr ———'s imprudent and improvident conduct, I was not only furnished, just in the nick of time, with a favourable situation to begin business in, recently improved and altered,

much to the better, at another's expense ; but the short-lived career, of that person, held out to me, as a *Beacon*, in all time coming.

Nor, does this spirit of industrious application of the means put in my power, to make these means productive of other means—or, in other words, the means of increasing my store, and so adding to the extent and respectability of my now growing, and, soon afterwards, pretty well established retail business, seem to have any way abated, after I had, in some degree, accomplished my purpose ; for I knew well that I had yet much to do, in the way of “making lay while the sun shines,”—and that, I availed myself of this knowledge, as I progressed, or got forward in the world, to a no ordinary degree, may not only be inferred, from the strange language, in which, a rather strange kind of man (a country customer of my own) one day accosted me,—“Dear man, I wonder, if ye'll ever take time to dee ;” but, from another circumstance, by which it appears, that, in the midst of my most bustling days, I had *almost died*, in reality ; for, the answer of the doctor to a near connexion, who had been asking his opinion, in respect to a very severe disorder, which had, towards the end of 1803, overtaken me, that “if I lived all that night, he would have some hopes,” shows, that *hope* itself, in that particular, at that time, was almost fled ;—and that disorder, in the opinion of our family surgeon, who might be more in the right, than one so full of ardent hope and youthful energy, as I was at the time, might be disposed to allow,—was brought on, by oppression, or over-exertion, in one of the branches of my profession.

Neither must the adage that “he that puts too many irons into the fire at one time, must needs have some of them cool,” be supposed to have any particular reference to a case such as mine ; for, I ever took good care, in all my extensions of, or additions to business, to advance gradually, making always the one step clear if possible, a way for the other ; and, in no instance, that I recollect, putting one foot forward, without having first secured, firm footing, or having reason to conclude, I had secured firm footing, for the one I had left behind.

My first great object, was, indeed, to establish, and to secure, upon a permanent foundation, a respectable retail trade, and those who remember my early habits, will do me the justice to say, that, until I had succeeded in a great degree in accomplishing this desirable object, few persons were found at work more early and late,—few more assiduous in their attention to business, than I was ; and it was not, till my services at the back of the counter could be better dispensed with, by having my place there, so well supplied by my excellent help-mate, aided, in my absence, by, a most attentive to my interests, and grateful, younger brother, who, at an early age, had come under my care, by the death of our only remaining parent, and had grown up among us as one of ourselves, under our mutually fostering attentions—that I thought of extending my operations in the wholesale line, to such an extent, as to give me reason, occasionally, to be absent on *raids* of business, up through, and far beyond the precincts of Liddesdale—*raids* of a far more excursive nature, than those undertaken by the Border Minstrel, for other purposes, about the same time.

The first of my *business journeys*, to any extent, seems to be that to the South, by the way of Kelso, Jedburgh, Hawick, &c., in 1799,\* since which time, I have made many a shorter, or longer, excursion, in the way of business, for I was seldom off my road in that respect,—the recollections of which, are associated with some very pleasing and amusing

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\* I see, in the first part of the life of Sir Walter Scott, lately published, a kind of reminiscence, of one of my customers, on this journey, viz., Mr Elliot, at that time, a respectable bookseller, and, I believe, wine merchant and medicine vender, in Kelso, of whose *AGED* or *FORMAL* appearance, I recollect nothing, although the period at which I saw and did business with him, must have been some time subsequent to that, when young Mr Scott was *his* customer. This, however, and his *powdered* head (for powdered heads were very common in those days) are matters of small consequence, and scarcely worth the recording ; but there were other customers that I met with in Kelso, on that journey, about whom, I wish Sir Walter's biographer had said something. There were, in particular, two young men, of the name of Palmer, who had succeeded to their father, in the printing line, in that place, but who, rather suddenly, disappeared, after I had become a little acquainted with them in the way of business, (not, however, previously to our accounts being balanced, and matters fully adjusted betwixt us,) of whose subsequent history, as well as of the cause of their departure, I should have wished to have heard something.

most glorious and radiant twilight behind;\* and the other was, in a few years afterwards, destined to leave me, for concerns and interests of his own.

It was fortunate for me, however, that, before the removal of the latter had taken place, the loss of the former had been so well made up, by the happy circumstance of my having drawn, once more, an invaluable treasure in "the lottery of matrimony," so that, my now greatly complicated, and widely extended business, does not seem to have suffered any sensible diminution, or interruption, on that account;† and it was well for me that my loss was so effectually supplied, for, by the time my other, old and faithful auxiliary, had taken his departure for the place of his future destination, circumstances had occurred, to make it *imperiously* necessary, if I wished to preserve the printing business, which I had been at so much labour and pains to establish in the county, to some one

\* I here allude to the gratifying, although mournful testimonial, or eulogium, to the worth of my deceased partner, communicated to me in a few, but very *expressive words*, in a letter from a gentleman, with whom I had, previously, and at that particular period, some very extensive dealings, and who, from his occasional visits to Dunbar, in the way of business, was pretty well acquainted with us both, viz., Mr James Lumsden, senior, the father of my late and present good friend Mr James Lumsden, junior, who has succeeded him in the business at Glasgow; This gentleman, the late Mr Lumsden, in a letter to me, received soon after the afflictive event of my wife's death, (which happened in the month of June, 1802.) writes, "I AM EXTREMELY SORRY FOR THE DEATH OF YOUR VALUABLE WIFE,—SHE CERTAINLY WAS A CREDIT TO HER SEX."—Could I, who had so long known, and who had so much reason to know, her value, be otherwise, than pleased, with such a testimony; and hence, the expression, *RADIANT TWILIGHT*, that to me, followed the night of her decease.

† People may say what they like, and talk as they please, about the *lottery of matrimony*, but, I believe, were men, in general, to cast their eyes and thoughts about them, and be a little more particular and circumspect, in selecting their future partners, from their temper and disposition, and the amiable qualities of the heart, instead of paying too much deference to external appearance, and extraneous circumstances, which, however, may be all very well, if they can be found united in the same person with the others;—In short, if men were more influenced in their choice, by a wish, rather to have a "fortune *in* a wife, than *with* a wife," there would be fewer jarring, and more happy, marriages in the world. Had marriage been a *lottery*, it would have been rather surprising that *both* of my drawings had come up a prize. Yet, I appeal to the above testimony of Mr L., as to how I had been situated formerly, in this respect; and, in regard to my *PRESENT PARTNER*, I have only to submit to the decision of those *who know her best*, among our numerous acquaintances and customers, in this quarter; and, to my readers, in general, after they have perused that chapter in my *Latter Struggles* which, embracing the period when we had just completed the twenty-fifth anniversary of our marriage, suggested the propriety, of my dedicating *it*, more particularly, to a record of her many virtues and sterling worth.

of the growing up branches of my own family, that, I should remove, that part of my establishment, to the county town, *without delay* ; in consequence of which, it may readily be supposed, although I did not account the sacrifice too great, which was made, with such obvious advantages to my family, my cares, instead of being lessened, were rather augmented and increased. Still, however, with the excellent new auxiliary I had got, to assist me in the management of my business, at Dunbar, and the prospect of one of my own family, who soon gave evidence, of being in possession of talents very adequate for the purpose, and had an early opportunity of shewing that I was not mistaken, being able to relieve me, at a no great distance of time, from much of this additional care and trouble, occasioned by having part of my establishment removed to Haddington—I had no reason to think my business, merely on account of, what I must have considered, at the time, only a temporary inconveniency, was yet overdone ;—and the best proof and evidence I can adduce that I was right in my conjecture, was the ease, with which, for a length of time, notwithstanding some rather discouraging circumstances, and untoward events, in the outset, we were enabled to keep our multifarious wheels in motion, with the increasing and increased state of our business, in every department, in both situations ;—the continued flourishing state of my finances,—and the almost unlimited credit on every hand I afterwards enjoyed—all of which, would not assuredly have followed, had the removal of my printing apparatus to the county town, been viewed, in any other light, than as proceeding from the true and proper motive, the *expediency and propriety of which*, must have appeared the more obvious to all, the more they were acquainted with it.

Yes ! I can appeal, and appeal with confidence, to my fellow survivors of those now distant, but once active and busy days, who had the best means of knowing me, through our transactions in business, if they observed any thing, in those days, in my conduct, by which their confidence could be lessened, or their credit to me, any way abridged—if ever, any of them, in short, perceived any diminution of punctuality in my dealings, *from the time they first knew me*,

until the clouds of misfortune began to lower upon me, at that advanced period—the AFTERNOON of my days—when these, my heavy and severe “LATTER STRUGGLES,” may be said, to have had their commencement.

For, it would be seen, did the nature of my present task, to which these, and a few more following chapters, may be considered as only introductory, permit me to go back farther into my experiences, and embrace a more detailed account of what happened, and took place, in the more early part of my days,—that, I have also, had my *ups*, as well as my *downs*,—my tides of prosperity, as well as those of adversity—a time to gain, as well as a time to lose—a time to walk peacefully and gently along the highway of life’s journey, enjoying, and in the enjoyment of its good things, as well as a time to be surrounded and harassed by its complicated evils—buffeted by its tempests—and baffled by the ruggedness of its paths. So that, the reasonableness and propriety of one of the mottoes I have exhibited on my title, can no more be doubted as applicable to the subject of the present volume, in which, I have good cause to say indeed, “What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil,” than that the other, which I affixed to my Retrospections, at the time I passed the boundary of the Evening of Life, viz., “’Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours,” was peculiarly suitable for that occasion.

There was yet another concern, and that of a pretty extensive nature, into which I had entered, when the sun of prosperity shone upon my dwelling, and I still rejoiced in the midst of my plentiful harvests and golden prospects; and that was, the canvassing or publication business, upon the extensive scale I had just commenced it, under such apparently flattering auspices, and encouraging prospects, when the clouds above-mentioned began to lower, and misfortune, after misfortune, in quick and rapid succession, overtook, and overwhelmed me;—and which, on that account, as coming more within the period, of my present more detailed consideration,—as well as, the long protracted series of unfortunate auctions, to which these misfortunes gave rise,—I therefore reserve until I again overtake them, in due course of writing.

## CHAPTER VI.

One explanation leads to another.—Reason for adopting the present title to my Book.—Natural division of time in the years of a Sexagenarian.—The evening of life, a solemn and important season.—Suitable employment for.—Conduct of the author upon arriving at, or passing, the boundary line of *threescore*.—His retrospections continued at convenient intervals.—Laid aside for a season.—Never to be resumed but in an altered form, and under different circumstances.—Some alteration might have taken place in the title of my book, even although no such calamitous event, as that, which occasioned it to be called *Latter Struggles*, had taken place.—Sufferings of the author in consequence of that event, and a good reason assigned for these sufferings.—His feelings not to be envied had he been otherwise affected.—The present expedient, one of the means adopted, to enable him to rise above misfortune.—Inference to be drawn in the present stage of the business.—An important question, or questions, answered.—In what sense the author may be said to have met with a very early disappointment.—Black spring of 1771, and other matters, in the earlier days of his pilgrimage, alluded to.—His first serious misfortune, and affecting recollection therewith connected.—Stands sentinel over his mother's coffin.—Sundry other early reminiscences, briefly noticed in passing.—*Little* incidents or casualties at the time, but *big* in their after consequences.—An early hobby that must ever be the subject of pleasing reflection.—Origin of my turning my thoughts to the matter of saving the lives of shipwrecked seamen.—Apparatus similar to Captain Manby's.—The Life Boat.—East Lothian printing-press, on one occasion, well directed and successfully applied.—Apparatus at Dunbar for restoring suspended animation.—How obtained, and where lodged.—Necessity of making the disposal of the Dunbar Life Boat generally known.

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THERE was an expression which I used towards the conclusion of my last chapter, that may seem to stand in need of some explanation, and that explanation, it will be found, will lead me to another, viz., the reason why, I have adopted, the present *title* to my book. The expression I allude to, is, that, in which I said, “the *afternoon* of my days,” when these my heavy and severe *Latter Struggles*, may be said to have had their commencement.”

If a man, arrived as I am, at the age of threescore, in looking back to the period which he has passed, is pleased to divide it into four equal portions of fifteen years each,—the first division comprehending the days of infancy and child-



hood, and what may be called his school-boy days, may be truly denominated the **MORNING**;—the second fifteen years, comprehending the days of adolescence and youthful manhood, may be fairly distinguished as his **FORENOON**;—the third fifteen years, embracing the years of mature and vigorous manhood, may, with propriety, be called his **NOONTIDE**;—and the fourth fifteen years, commencing at the time he has passed his meridian, and continuing, during the period his sun has made some progress in its declension, may be, as truly designated, as the **AFTERNOON** of his days;—all beyond that, beginning at the line of demarcation at *sixty*, and continuing onwards till the night of death arrives, when “no man can see to work,” may be most appropriately styled **THE EVENING OF LIFE**,—or, that solemn and important season, so peculiarly fitted for serious inquiry and sedate reflection; when man, standing, as it were, on the confines of both worlds, and placed at last, on the little now contracted isthmus, that separates time from eternity, must feel himself, particularly called upon, if not previously disposed to do so, to “talk with his past hours,” before they are forever fled from him, or left behind beyond the reach of his hearing, in order that he may ask them, in the words I have adopted as one of my mottos, “what report they bore to Heaven,”—what intelligence they conveyed to that *once far off, but now near* country, in which, he is about to take up his more lasting abode.

It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that the writer of these pages should, apart from all other considerations, which may be supposed to have had some share in his determination, and in influencing his conduct on that occasion, when he found the evening shades descending upon his eyelids, and the night hastening apace, feel a strong desire, or rather an irresistible impulse, growing upon him, *once more* to take up the pen, and that, so early as the hour of three, or a very little after it, on the morning of the 14th of January 1831, the morning of that, to him, eventful day, which ushered in the sixty-first, and completed his sixtieth year, he should have entered upon sundry cogitations, preparatory to his task; part of which, before the clock struck five, he had committed to paper, under the title of “**THE EVENING OF**

**LIFE; OR, RETROSPECTIONS OF A SEXAGENARIAN."**

These Retrospections he had continued at convenient intervals, and as he had leisure, down to the 15th of December following, when, in order to devote his attention more exclusively to the concerns of business, at the approaching (as he had generally found it to be) throng season of the year, he laid aside his work; or, as he expressed himself in writing to a friend at the time, "hung his harp upon the willows," with the intention of resuming it again at a more convenient season, little dreaming, alas! that he might never do so, or if he did, that it would be under such altered prospects and different circumstances;—for two days had not elapsed, from the time that he had thus laid aside his task, when he received, from an authority that could not be disputed, a piece of intelligence, so disastrous, that it withered, as with a breath, all his too fondly indulged hopes, and levelled with the dust, (as it now appears) his too sanguinely anticipated prospects, in a moment!

He would by no means be understood, in these expressions of his sentiments, to say, that if nothing of this disastrous nature had taken place, the contents of the manuscript above alluded to, would have ever met the eye of the public, or, if they had, that there would have been no alteration. There are many things in the original, that, in this case, behoved to be suppressed; and several that, no doubt, would have been much altered; and, indeed, before laying the manuscript aside, some alteration in the *title* had already been contemplated. It has, however, turned out, in the decrees of that inscrutable Providence, the vindication of which, in its dealings with men, he trusts, he shall never lose sight of, whatever complexion his work may assume, that his book, should thus come before the public neither with its original title, nor in its original form; and under circumstances, that left it not to the author to do so, as a matter of mere taste or volition, but as the effect of a more imperious impulse, *the sad necessity*, which, (at a time, when, after "a life of labour," it would have been very desirable to have entered upon "an age of ease,") he now lay under, still to be up, and be doing something, to enable him the better, to ward off, or endure, the coming blasts of the winter

of age ; and to render, if possible, somewhat more comfortable, those otherwise cheerless days of declining life, in which the wise man says "there is no pleasure."

That he suffered much, and most acutely, on the occasion, he will not attempt to deny, nor would he envy the feelings of those, who, in such a situation, could be otherwise affected, were it only for the sufferings of others that might be involved in their calamity, more than for their own : but it would have been inconsistent with the dictates of that religion, which had been his consolation on so many trying occasions, and that he had so long, however imperfectly, aimed at, as his rule of action, to have wasted his time in ungrateful murmurs, or unavailing complaints ;—hence, he lost no time, so soon as he rallied his spirits a little, in turning his mind to the most eligible measures to be adopted, under existing circumstances, for bettering his now, more than ever, depressed condition, and enabling him, if it were possible, even at this late hour of his pilgrimage, to rise above misfortune ;—and, as one of the means, he has been led to adopt the present expedient, which, however humiliating and grievous at *his* time of life, he has reason to think has been generally approved of, as at once lawful and laudable, from the very respectable number of subscribers with which, he is now enabled to go to press ; and of which, he trusts, he will ever retain a grateful remembrance.

But what, it may be asked, has been the result of all this enquiry, and all these protracted cogitations ? What, the mighty discovery that the Sexagenarian has made, in this new task or toil, that he has, as part of "his labour," taken to himself, under the sun ?

Has it not been, to find that his whole life, with some little exception, has been one of toil and exertion—care and anxiety—difficulty and trouble ;—and that the latter part of it, or that which may be said to have commenced with the AFTER-NOON of his existence, has been, attended by circumstances peculiarly heart-rending and calamitous ?

Yes ! Although it is that part of it, as my title implies, that comes more particularly within the scope of my present lucubrations, yet I must observe, in allusion to the review of the

days of my pilgrimage in general, that—If human life may be compared to a VOYAGE, mine has not been without its storms and tempests—its eddies and whirlpools—its perils and shipwrecks:—If human life may be compared to a JOURNEY, mine has not been without its bogs and quagmires—its precipices and chasms—its briars and thorns:—If human life may be likened to a RACE, the following pages will show, that, in my case at least, the race has not been to the swift;—and, if to a FIGHT, they will as amply demonstrate, that, however unsuccessful have been my efforts, my conflicts, or rather long-protracted series of conflicts, have been severe and arduous in the extreme.

Were it possible, indeed, that I could indulge in any levity of expression, on such an occasion, I might say, that Disappointment shook hands with me on my entrance into life, and marked me for her own, from the moment of my birth: for, being born on that day of almost universal joy and merriment, among the humbler classes in Scotland, at the time, *Old Hansel Monday*, I must soon have found, if, at that early stage of life's journey I had been capable of finding, that, in consequence of my parents being what were called, in these days, *New Style Folks*, I had come into the world a week too late for the *feast*;—and, were I disposed to be ominous, I might go a step farther, and add, that having arrived in these regions, just upon the eve of what has been distinguished as the Black Spring of 1771, was but a too certain prognostic of the unfavourable nature of my lot, and of the scramble I should afterwards have, in consequence of unpropitious times,—unpropitious seasons,—and unpropitious circumstances,—for the means of existence.

But, the fact is, I am not disposed to indulge in either the one or the other. The having missed the feast, in consequence of being too late for the *feast day* in my father's house, was, I trust, abundantly made up, or compensated, by a plentiful supply of that nutritious and wholesome aliment, provided by a kind Providence for little folks of my age;—and the blasting and withering effects of that memorable Spring, which so immediately followed the time of my birth,

could never be felt by me, under the tender and fostering care of an affectionate maternal parent.\*

My first serious misfortune, however, seems to have been at a very early period of my life, in the great loss of that parent, for all the recollection I have of her, arises from two associations connected with the remembrance of her existence, both betokening her *early* removal from me, or that it *must* have happened in the years of childhood.

In the one instance, I still behold my dear mother, by the eye of memory, putting me to flight by calling CHARLIE HASTIE to put me into prison, for being engaged in the play of building dams, in the gutter, opposite my father's shop door, when I should, no doubt, if I was old enough, have been with JEAN LYAL, our female preceptress, or mistress of the infant school of Dunbar, in those days. In the other, I recal to my recollection, the affecting circumstance of standing a voluntary sentinel over my mother's coffin, forbidding the profane touch of any of my little comrades to come in contact with it, while old James Gray was in the act of preparing it in his shop, for the last sad purpose to which it was destined,—the containing, all that remained of, to one of my years, the greatest of all earthly treasures; however ignorant, or insensible, I might have *then* been of what is implied in the endearing name of MOTHER, and of the unspeakable loss I had, at such an early period of my life, sustained.

But my time and space, at present, do not permit me to enter more fully into the details of this affecting circumstance, and other losses, crosses, and disappointments, or whatever we may call them, that I afterwards experienced in my juvenile years, and as I grew up to maturity; among which, however, I would just mention, in passing, from memory,—my being

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\* Dr Johnson says of the Spring of 1771, "The season was so severe in the island of Skye, that it is remembered by the name of the *black Spring*;" and the amiable and pleasing natural historian of the village of Selborne, in allusion to the same period, writes, "At the end of March, the face of the earth was naked to a surprising degree;—wheat hardly to be seen, and no signs of any grass; turnips all gone, and sheep in a starving way; all provisions rising in price;"—and, as it is not to be supposed, that East Lothian was exempted from her share of what was going on to the north and to the south, we may naturally infer, that our county also felt the effects of that disastrous period.

effectually cured from a knack of imitating the feats of that, in those days, Prince of Conjurors, the great Katerfelto, by swallowing a half-penny in *earnest*, when I meant *only* to do it *in jest*!—the check I got to my early propensity for soldiering, by the timeous, or rather hazardous, bursting of a large horse-pistol barrel, mounted on a rudely constructed stock, in imitation of a miniature musket, while I was in the act of discharging it;—the several circumstances that must have conspired to drive my thoughts from my once prevailing hobby, an inclination for the life of a sailor, to which, it is probable, I had not only been drawn by reading the adventures of Robinson Crusoe, and associating so much with sailor boys, in a seaport town, in my early years, but from perusing, as I grew up, the Voyages of that illustrious navigator, Captain Cook, whose name, and whose fame, must have gone abroad, and been at its height at the time, to the less hazardous employment of a bookseller, where, my taste for voyages, travels, and discoveries, might be indulged and gratified at the fire side,—such as, the narrow escape I, at one time made, from being upset in a squall, by the mast of the boat giving way,—the unhappy catastrophe that befel the boat of the *Active*, of Shields, in my school-boy days, when attempting to make for the harbour, after, it is likely (for I do not recollect the fate of the vessel), the ship to which she belonged, had suffered in the storm; which circumstance will be found very affectingly alluded to, in my “Tour among the Tombs, in a Country Church-yard,” under the head, “The Burial Place of Strangers,” at the 153d, and a few subsequent pages, of the second volume of the *Monthly Monitor*,—together with the many other afflictive scenes of shipwreck, which must have occurred under my eye, in my boyish days, considering, that they happened precisely at the time, and under the circumstances alluded to, by Captain BASIL HALL, himself a native of, and, in his early days, a resident, at the family mansion of *Dunglass*, in this neighbourhood, who says, in the first chapter of the first volume, of his first series of “Fragments:”—“Thus, at this time (*i. e.* before the *Bell-Rock Light-House* was built), from three to four, and sometimes half a dozen,

vessels used to be wrecked every winter, within a mile or two of our very door."

These numerous mournful scenes of shipwreck, it may reasonably be supposed, had their effect in weaning me, to a certain degree (for I do not think they were very decisive in this respect), from my early propensity to the sea; but, at all events, they seem rather to have increased, than diminished, the interest I seem always to have taken, in the welfare and comfort of that highly useful and meritorious class of men, to whom, I seem to have been so warmly attached by juvenile sympathy; for, of this I gave early indication, in my attempt to procure an apparatus for *this part of the coast*, similar to, if not exactly the same with, that now employed under the auspices of Government, as the invention of Captain MANBY,—long, (as will be seen by a perusal of what is said on the subject, under the head "Useful information in cases of Shipwreck," in the 472d, and some subsequent pages, of the second volume of my Cheap Magazine) before that gentleman's name was heard of in the annals of humanity.\*

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\* It was on one of the melancholy occasions above alluded to, viz., the shipwreck of a vessel on Tyne Sands, I think, in the winter of 1792, that I first set my brains to work, to devise some method by which the crews of vessels, in such perilous situations, as I then witnessed, might be rescued from the impending danger that hung over them, and threatened soon to close their sufferings in a watery grave; and it is rather remarkable, although otherwise not much to be wondered at, from the circumstance of my knowing something of the nature of harpoon guns, by going about the Greenlandmen, (of which our port had a very fair proportion in those days), and the little acquaintance I had with the system of projectiles, to which it appears I had paid some attention while at school, that I should have hit upon the same plan, as that which has been so recently put in practice, on the coast, as the invention of Captain Manby. I do not mention this in a way invidious to this gentleman, who has assuredly the merit of bringing the invention or discovery, belong to whom it may, into *practical use*, and that is no small point gained in the cause of humanity, and for which, it will be observed, I have shown every disposition to render him justice, previously to the very friendly correspondence I had with him afterwards, and in which he is pleased to compliment me on "the candour, liberality, and justice," he discovered in my motives, &c. in the pages of my little periodical, more than once already quoted under the above head.

The greatest regret with me is, that, if my intentions had not been so completely thwarted, at a period so early, as the beginning of 1793, in a way so little creditable to the feelings, considering the wide field there was, for the use of such an apparatus, ~~ON THIS SIDE THE TWEED~~—and, as it has now turned out, by its subsequent adoption, so little creditable to the judgment of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce—there is, at least, a probability, that such a means of saving the lives of shipwrecked mariners, would have been in operation on this part of the coast of the United

And, that my zeal, in this respect, was no way abated at a subsequent period, when that other means of saving the lives of shipwrecked seamen, in the absence of the other, had become the favourite of the day; and the public feeling and sympathy were the more easily aroused to the necessity of such a thing in this quarter, in consequence of, the melancholy spectacle exhibited on the morning of the fatal Sunday, the 6th of September, 1807, when, among others, the distressing scene was witnessed by so many spectators, at Thorntonloch, of a poor sailor boy perishing, from mere exhaustion and cold, in consequence of being so long exposed to the "pelting of the pitiless storm," on board a stranded vessel, while the afflicted lookers on from the beach had not the power of deliverance, for want of the means, until it was, alas! too late,—until he was only rescued, as I have expressed myself, in my printed address to the public, on the lamented occasion, "to exchange a watery grave for a land one,—just to look gratefully in the face of his deliverers, and then expire!"

That my zeal, I say, was no way abated, by that time, must be abundantly evident to those, who were witnesses at the time, of my exertions, and the active part I took, with the assistance of my coadjutors, and the aid of my powerful auxiliary, the printing press, in procuring, notwithstanding the discouragement I received in my former attempt, *A LIFE BOAT*, with its necessary appendages, appurtenances, &c.\*

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Kingdom, long before the Bell-Rock Beacon was lighted up—when, agreeably to Captain Hall's report, such an invention must have been of much more utility than at present, when scenes of shipwreck are fortunately of more rare occurrence than formerly. Here is an appalling question, that I would put to the gentlemen composing the above named Society—Had my request been granted, instead of being refused on such silly grounds, might not such an apparatus as that which now goes under the name of Captain Manby's invention, have been of much use, on many occasions since, particularly on the disastrous night betwixt Saturday the 5th, and Sunday the 6th September, 1807? And, to the inhabitants of this neighbourhood, I would say,—Might not, in that case, the life of the boy, who suffered on that occasion, in consequence of so long exposure in the shipwreck at Thornton Loch, have been saved?

\* This powerful engine, the printing press, must have been, well directed and successfully applied, on this occasion; as I see the date of my first address to the public, under the head "*LIFE BOAT*," is, the 21st October, 1807, just a week after I had called together the first Committee meeting, on the evening of the 14th, (having previously corresponded with Mr Greathead on the 4th, and receiving his answer dated the 8th,) while it appears, from another printed document, dated the 9th of November in the year following, that the



and, including, **AN APPARATUS FOR RESTORING SUSPENDED ANIMATION**,† for these dangerous shores, that had, previously to 1811, when the Bell-Rock Beacon was first lighted up, on so

whole matter of providing the **BOAT—BOAT-HOUSE—CARRIAGE**, and **TACKLE**, together with the **APPARATUS FOR RESTORING SUSPENDED ANIMATION**, was completed, and paid for, from our numerous subscriptions, amounting, with interest, to £371. 19s. 1d. in the short space of *exactly* a twelvemonth from the date of our first meeting—the whole having been declared in a state of readiness on the evening of October the 14th, 1808—a rather strange coincidence; but, it will be seen, not a moment too soon, when it is added, as another remarkable circumstance, that the boat was, in fact, called away into actual service, *early on the following morning*, (and long before, the Leith Life Boat, on the same errand, had reached the streets of Dunbar,) under the direction of, that enterprising hero of these shores, Mr David Laing, (one of the original Life Boat Committee) to the assistance of Captain Dix, of his Majesty's sloop *Cygnnet*, whose certificate attached—for I have no room here for the documents more at large—speaks for itself:—

*This is to certify the Directors of the Dunbar Life Boat, that every assistance was rendered to His Majesty's sloop Cygnnet, on the 16th of October, by the crew in her, under the direction of Mr David Laing, whose own exertions were very great; also, that every benefit would have been received from her if the wind had remained on the shore. Her appearance over the rocks on the preceding evening gave great hopes to all on board, who had been so long in expectation of being dashed to pieces.—Given under my hand, on board H. M. Sloop Cygnnet, in Leith Roads, this 26th day of October, 1808.*

EDWD. DIX, Captain.

† The **APPARATUS FOR RESTORING SUSPENDED ANIMATION**, originally purchased from the funds raised by the Life Boat Committee, as may be seen in the annexed account, was at first, I believe, lodged with Alexander Johnston, Esq. at that time a most respectable surgeon in this place. It has since been transferred, or handed over, to the keeping of the late Dr Turnbull, another respectable gentleman in the line of his profession, and, from the great zeal and activity he displayed in many cases of shipwreck, it could not have been put into better hands as *custodian*. It still remains in the possession of his son, Mr James Turnbull, who has succeeded his father in the business, and who will, no doubt feel gratified, in making its services available, in any cases, in which it may be useful,—whether in consequence of accidents proceeding from shipwreck, or otherwise.

**AMOUNT AND EXPENDITURE** of the funds raised by the **ORIGINAL DUNBAR LIFE BOAT COMMITTEE**, as made up for the statement, dated 9th November, 1808, and afterwards circulated among the Subscribers:—

Amount of Subscriptions received, including Interest, but, deducting sums unpaid at that date,	-	-	-	£366	14	1
Paid Mr Greathead for the boat, and stamp,	£150	2	0			
R. Purves and others, for carriage, ropes, and harness,	-	91	7	10		
David Simpson, for the boat-house, &c.	102	1	3			
Captain John Findlay, freight of the boat from Shields,	-	5	0	0		
Apparatus for restoring suspended animation	3	8	0			
John Salton, for collecting subscriptions,	1	1	0			
Twelve men for trial of the boat,	-	1	1	0		
Postages, Stamps, &c.	-	1	3	2		
At a meeting of Directors,	-	0	5	0		
For bringing the boat into the house,	0	5	0			
				£355	14	3
Balance at the disposal of the Directors,	-	-	-	£10	19	10

many occasions proved the seaman's grave ! (as see the allusion to my correspondence with *Mr Greathead*, the inventor of the Life Boat, and other particulars, recorded in the volume of the Cheap Magazine, above quoted, under the same head continued, pages 520 to 526.\*)

But if, in either the one or the other of the particulars mentioned, I have been the *first*, I see that I have not been the *last* BOOKSELLER, who has interested himself in the matter of saving a fellow creature from a watery grave ; for we have a very recent instance, in that of Mr William E. Reid, junior, one of the firm, and son of my worthy old acquaintance, Mr William Reid, senior, bookseller in Leith, who, I think, according to the account that appeared in the papers about the time, was standing in the shop door of the firm, on Friday, the 7th of September last (1832), and seeing a crowd collected, or collecting, apparently drawn together by some object in the Harbour, rushed forward, and having ascertained it to be a boy in the act of drowning, while he was borne downwards by the current, leaped in, from what, the bystanders seem to have viewed as rather an appalling height, the tide being almost gone, and had him in his arms before he had well time to recollect himself, in which condition, they were both picked up, after having drifted to a considerable distance, by a boat that landed them on the opposite side. Now, whatever construction the modesty of the performer may induce him to put upon it himself, I cannot consider the act of a person, risking his *own* life, to save that of another, otherwise,

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\* This makes it the more necessary, that the circumstance of the disposal of the boat, &c. (which took place on the 18th October, 1829,) and consequent want, of such a means of safety, to the distressed mariner, in danger of being shipwrecked on these shores, should be made as public and generally known as possible, for the idea, that there is *still* such a thing kept up here, in a state of readiness, may mislead others, as it appears to have done the master of a vessel, that was shipwrecked within these few years in this neighbourhood, who told Mr David Laing, (whose name has been already mentioned) that, when he found himself in danger, he expected the Dunbar Life Boat would have come to his assistance. On this account I would recommend it to my good friends, the Messrs Chambers, should they have occasion to put a new edition of their "Gazetteer of Scotland" to press, to attend to the circumstance of the disposal of the boat, in what, they may afterwards take occasion to say, on this head, under the article DUNBAR ;—and I know the suggestion, will be taken in good part, whether, in such a manner, they may have an opportunity of availing themselves of it, or not.

than as one of the most intrepid, disinterested, and devoted acts of humanity—in the performance of which, in this instance, Mr William E. Reid, junior, Bookseller in Leith, deserves justly, to rank high in the catalogue of, **BRITAIN'S NOBLEST DESCRIPTION OF HEROES !**

To these, may be added, the several deprivations, and humiliating circumstances, in which I was placed, and was obliged, or considered it my duty, to submit to, in consequence of the misfortunes of my master, during the time of my apprenticeship,—and the early period, at which I was thrown upon my own resources, by the death of my only surviving parent, ere, according to the natural, or usual, course of events, that apprenticeship should have expired.

These, with whatever else happened, either of an exhilarating or depressing nature, whether they bore the complexion of **UPS** and **DOWNs**, or **JOYS** and **SORROWS**, up to the commencement of the last division, or stage, of *my sixty years pilgrimage*, must be passed over for the present, although there is, no doubt, to be seen, in that part of the panorama, much variety,—much continued, and almost incessant, struggling, at the oar of life,—and much to excite the sympathy, if my conduct should be deemed undeserving, the approbation of, my fellow-men.

## CHAPTER VII.

The whole period of my existence, almost one continued struggle.—What else to be expected in a state of probation.—It would be therefore vain, as it would be impious, to complain.—Opinion of Plutarch, as deducible from the light of nature.—Of old Friar Augustine, of the Convent of the Carmelites, in his interesting conversation with his impatient auditor, the young Englishman.—Quotation from “The Benefits of Affliction,” in the Cheap Magazine.—Adversity, according to Lord Bacon, the blessing of the New Testament.—Man is indeed born to trouble.—His most becoming conduct in the present state.—Examples of human suffering, or a thorn in the flesh, in the case of the good patriarch Jacob.—Of the upright man of the land of Uz.—Of Socrates, Plato, Epicurus, Seneca.—Of our own John Howard.—Other examples from among our own countrymen.—Goldsmith, Addison, Dr Young, Milton, Alexander Cruden, the poet Cowper, James Beattie, the author of the Minstrel ;—and of his successor in the art of minstrelsey, Sir Walter Scott, the apparent inheritor of the minstrel’s grave.—Indication of sore and painful feeling, in a mind, long accustomed to give evidence of being otherwise affected.—The pious and the virtuous,—the talented and the gifted,—are not exempted from the calamities of life.—The doctrine of the great Founder of Christianity, gives no reason to those who embrace that profession, to expect exemption from affliction, but the contrary.—“The Benefits of Affliction,” again alluded to.—Tribulation, the Christian’s legacy.—Its happy consequences, and final blessed results.—Comfortable hopes, and delightful anticipations.—Patience and resignation to the will of God, at once our wisdom and our duty.—Motives and reasons for bearing up under affliction.

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THE whole period of my existence, indeed, from the cradle to the grave, from which I cannot be far distant, may be said to have been, almost one continued struggle betwixt hopes and disappointments—acquirements and losses—joys and sorrows—domestic enjoyments, of the most exquisite description, and family griefs of the most agonizing and excruciating nature—successes in my pursuits, and in my humble endeavours to do good, and be useful in my generation to the best of my ability, in the use of the means Providence had put in my power, at times, beyond my most sanguine expectations ; but only, to see some of the most favourite of these successes again blasted, and the result and effects of my well-meant endeavours pass away as an empty dream,—without a relic of their remembrance, but what memory, may be able to snatch from the

oblivious stream, in course of my retrospections and reminiscences.

But what else, it may be asked, had I, more than others, reason to expect, in a state of trial and probation, such as this? Are not these the very materials of which human life, in general, is composed? Do not these constitute part and parcel of the conditions, upon which we hold our earthly tenure? Do they not form the frame-work of that intricate and mysterious machinery, by which, an all-wise and all-powerful, and ever-gracious Deity, overrules the events of time, and the affairs of men, bringing good out of evil—order out of seeming confusion—and permanent felicity in another world, out of the temporary, though often times grievous and distressing calamities of this.

It would be in vain, therefore, as it would be impious and unwise, to expect, in this life, an exemption from human suffering. Even PLUTARCH, without availing himself of other information than what was deducible from the light of nature, and the fitness of things, justly remarks, that, “In human life there is a constant change of fortune, and it is unreasonable to expect an exemption from the common fate. Life itself decays, and all things are daily on the change:”—

And old FRIAR AUGUSTINE, of the convent of the Carmelites at Augshurgh, who may be expected to have derived part of his information from another source, as an argument, to convince his youthful, inexperienced, and impatient auditor, that young but amiable enthusiast, who had visited and partaken of the hospitality of the convent, of the truth of his doctrine; and, in order to reconcile him, more fully, to the circumstances attending our respective lots, in this mortal state, (as will be found in my paper on “The Benefits of Affliction,” in the “Cheap Magazine,”\*) emphatically observes to his astonished auditor, the young Englishman,—

“ ‘ You fell into a reverie, produced by a contemplation of the happiness of a society existing without any difference, and where no human breath should be wasted in a sigh, nor ear

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\* See Cheap Magazine, No. 10, being the Number for October, 1813.

tortured with a groan—no tears to trickle, no griefs or calamities to wring the heart ?

“ ‘ Yes, father,’ said I, catching the idea with my former enthusiasm ; ‘ that would be my wish—that my greatest, first desire.’ ‘ Then seest thou,’ interrupted he, ‘ the extent of thy wish, suppose you could realize it, which, thank God ! you cannot.’

“ ‘ What ! thank God that I cannot ? are these your thoughts ?’

“ ‘ Yes, my son ; and ere Madona marks the progress of ten minutes with her sceptre, they will be yours too.’

“ ‘ Impossible !’

“ ‘ Hear me, my son !—Is not death a horrible precipice to the view of human creatures ?’

“ ‘ Assuredly,’ said I, ‘ the most horrible—human laws declare that, by resorting to it for punishment, as the ultimatum of all terrible inflictions.’

“ ‘ When then,’ said he, ‘ covered as we are with misery, to leave this world is so unsupportable to the human reflection, what must it be, if we had nothing but joy and felicity to taste in this life ?’

“ ‘ Mark me, child !’ said he, with an animated zeal that gave an expression to his countenance beyond any thing I had ever seen :

“ ‘ The miseries, the calamities, the heart-rendings, and the tears, which are so intimately interwoven by the Great Artist in our natures, as not to be separated in a single instance, are, in the first place, our security of a future state, and in the next place, serve to slope the way before us, and, by gradual operation, fit our minds for viewing, with some sort of fortitude, that hideous chasm that lies between us and that state—death. View those miseries, then, as the special acts of mercy and commiseration of a beneficent Creator, who, with every calamity, melts away a link of that earthly chain that fetters our wishes to this dismal world.

“ ‘ Accept his blessings and his goods when he sends them, with gratitude and enjoyment : receive his afflictions too, with as joyous acceptance, and as hearty gratitude. Thus, and not otherwise, you will realize all your Utopian flights of de-

sire, by turning every thing to matter of comfort, and living contented, with dispensations which you cannot alter, and, if you could, would most certainly alter for the worse.' ”

And so fully convinced was an author, whom I have oftener than once already quoted, of the uses of adversity, and *its* benefits or advantages, that he calls it “the blessing of the *New Testament*, as prosperity is of the *Old*.”\*

Man is indeed born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upwards, and it is equally becoming in every descendant of Adam, even in the most virtuous, as it was in the good and upright man of the land of Uz, to exclaim, in the spirit of patient resignation, under the most aggravated and excruciating of human sufferings,—“What ! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil ?”

It is no wonder, then, that the good old patriarch JACOB, should have had occasion to express himself in the mournful and pathetic strain recorded in Scripture, “Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been,”—that the upright JOB, should have had such troublesome neighbours as the Sabeans and Chaldeans to carry off his property, and such an arch enemy as Satan, otherwise to afflict and to harass him ;—that SOCRATES, the most patient, as well as the most learned of ancient sages, had his Xantippe ;—that the divine PLATO, as he has been called, had his Dionysius ;—that EPICURUS, who appears to have been a very different person from what he has been represented to have been, had his implacable enemies, the Stoics, to blast his reputation by their misrepresentations ;—that the virtuous SENECA was fated to live, and to bleed to death, in the time of that monster of vice and cruelty, Nero ;—and, that, the good JOHN HOWARD, that prince of philanthropists, had a source of so much anxiety, vexation, and uneasiness, in his Son. Indeed, nothing is more evident, than that many of the pious and the good of all nations and ages, as well as some of the most talented and gifted individuals, in the various countries of the world, have had their full share of the troubles and afflictions of this life, *which, indeed, spring not out of the dust.*

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\* Lord Bacon.

To instance only a few more among our own countrymen,—that the unsuspecting GOLDSMITH, so early quoted, had his troubles, must be sufficiently evident from what has already been advanced ;—and it is too well known, that our immortal ADDISON, made no addition to his happiness, by his rather unequal marriage ;—the plaintive AUTHOR OF THE NIGHT THOUGHTS had his living Lorenzo (whoever he was) to excite his anxiety, as well as his dead Philander and Narcissa to deplore ! so that, this harmonious but plaintive writer, had too much reason to declare, in his preface, that “the occasion of his poem was real, not fictitious ;”—poor JOHN MILTON, while he saw so far into other scenes connected with things *past* and *future*, was blind to the light of day, and remained in darkness, as to the busy matters passing around him in the present world ;—the indefatigable CRUDEN, to whose memory, gentlemen in the clerical profession should have raised a monument long ago, was subject, it is well known, to fits of mental aberration,\*—while it has been remarked of the amiable author of the Task, COWPER, designated by Sir Walter Scott as “a poet of deep feeling and bright genius,” that his mental malady impeded his popularity, while alive,—it may be observed also, in respect to BEATTIE, the author of the Minstrel, who died a few years later, that, at the time of the death of his only remaining son, and which made him exclaim in the anguish of his heart, “I have now done with the world,” he had yet another cause of secret grief, the worst of all griefs to bear, in the mental alienation of his wife, who, for some time previous to his death, was, on that account,

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\* The following note is taken from an advertisement that I published in August, 1815, in reference to his concordance, recommending this invaluable work to the attention of the public :—“ We may judge of the estimation in which a work of this kind was formerly held, from the single fact, that Cardinal Hugo de S. Chara, is said to have employed no less than 500 monks at once, in assisting him in the laborious undertaking of compiling a concordance ;” and I much doubt if their united exertions produced so *complete* and *invaluable* a work, as *Alexander the corrector*, as this indefatigable mortal styled himself, did, of his own accord, unassisted. Indeed, although I have not a copy of this work to dispose of, I cannot conclude better than in the words in which I commenced the advertisement above alluded to, “ It is a most useful and indispensable work for all Christian families ;” for I think now, as I did then, that “no Christian family should be without it ;” so that the public in general, as well as their pastors, are concerned in paying some tribute to the memory of a man whose laborious task few men would have undertaken.



obliged to be separated from him; a circumstance, that must have been peculiarly painful to one, in whom, according to his biographer, great tenderness of heart, and the keenest sensibility of soul, were conspicuous;—and what shall we say of BEATTIE'S SUCCESSOR IN THE ART OF MINSTRELSY? him of whom it may be said, if he did not catch the minstrel's robe, he at least inherited the minstrel's grave,\*—who, notwithstanding his great popularity for many years, while alive, gave so much indication of being struck with the arrow of discomfort before he was called hence, by the expression he made use of at the Jedburgh meeting in March 1831, in alluding to that part of his auditors who had been *hissing him*, viz., that their hissing “gave him no more concern than the braying of the beasts of the field;”—for, disguise it as he might, that Sir Walter felt sore, very sore, on that occasion, must have been sufficiently apparent:—And the tears he was observed to shed on his way home, as well as other expressions he gave utterance to,—plainly evinced, that the iron had entered deeply into his soul:—In short, in the language of Messrs Chambers, in that number of their Journal containing the Life of Sir Walter, “there can be no doubt,

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\* Who can read the description of the Minstrel's grave, as so beautifully delineated in his impassioned language, by the *first* minstrel of Scotia's sons, without now recurring to the *second*. I have, myself, seen the “evening sun shine sweetly o'er” Beattie's grave, in the church-yard of St Nicholas, Aberdeen; but it is not, at all, such a one as is here described. Does any one not suspect, after reading Beattie's description, that there was more than mere *chance* or *accident*, in Sir Walter Scott's having fixed upon, and securing for himself, a place of sepulture among the ruins of Dryburgh Abbey? It might have been such, if he had never seen Beattie, or Beattie's Minstrel. But, presuming that he might have seen one, if he had not seen both, is there not, a strong probability at least, that his wishes in this respect, were somewhat similar to those of the Northern Bard, and that the great Border Minstrel, as he has been emphatically styled, had the lines in view, and floating in his imagination, when he made the selection of these *venerable ruins* as his place of interment?

It is, however, so far as I know, an original thought. Let the reader, therefore, read the lines, and judge for himself.

“Let vanity adorn the marble tomb,  
 With trophies, rhymes, and scutcheons of renown,  
 In the deep dungeon of some Gothic dome,  
 Where night, and desolation, ever frown;—  
 Mine be the breezy hill, that skirts the down,  
 Where, a green grassy turf is all I crave,  
 With here, and there, a violet bestrown,  
 Fast by a brook, or fountain's murmur'ing wave;  
 And many an evening sun shine sweetly o'er my grave!”

See BEATTIE'S MINSTREL, Book 2d, 17th Stanza.

that the Jedburgh meeting, and the continued excitement upon the Reform Question, did much to sadden the last days of this illustrious man, and perhaps, also, to accelerate his decline."

It must be evident, therefore, that neither the *pious* nor the *good*—the *talented* or the *gifted*—are, by any means, exempted from the calamities of life. On the contrary, these seem rather to be the marked butts for the arrows of misfortune, and so far, such may be considered, (according to the Christian doctrine) among the privileged orders of mankind, in these respects.

For, not only the doctrine of the great Founder of Christianity, but of his expositionists, the Apostles, is completely decisive as to this point—that the afflictions and tribulations of a present life, are to be looked upon in a very different light, than as testimonies, of the Heavenly displeasure, and indications of the hatred of the Most High.

This matter is pretty satisfactorily cleared up, and distinctly stated, in the Number of the Cheap Magazine formerly referred to, for "the Benefits of Affliction," which paper, it will there be seen, is very appropriately introduced, under the head, or motto,—

" O THOU who dost permit these ills to fall  
For gracious ends, and wouldst that man should mourn."

To that article I would again refer, as to an excellent and choice antidote against the miseries and calamities of life, and would here shortly observe, that, for Christians, in particular, to expect to be the subjects of such exemptions, is to expect impossibilities, or, that which would give men good reason to suspect the unsoundness of the ground, upon which they stand; for, the High Priest of their profession has expressly declared,—nay, left it as his dying legacy to his followers—"In the world ye shall have tribulation;" although he adds, for their comfort, "but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

After this, we need scarcely quote the words of the Apostle, as to the benefits to be derived from this often unpalatable medicine, to those who have their full share of it allotted to them, viz., "that tribulation worketh patience, and

patience experience, and experience hope,"—that hope which bears us up, under the weight of our burdens here, and which, we trust, will be turned into reality and fruition hereafter, where, neither the frowns of fortune, or, its still more pernicious smiles, shall operate, so as to draw us aside from the path of duty ;—where, it will be found, that the short afflictions of a present life, do, indeed, bear no comparison to the joys to be revealed ;—and that, in reality, the misfortunes and losses, the troubles and crosses, the heart-felt sorrows and agonizing pangs, which the virtuous and the good, in all ages and nations, and under all possible conceivable conditions and circumstances, have met with, in this mortal state, —instead of being, what short-sighted tenants of these habitations of clay, have ever been too apt to consider them, as marks of the displeasure of an incensed Deity—are, in their happy results, and the blessed fruits they have been found to produce, rather to be regarded, as they are, tokens and testimonies of his dearest love.

Is it not plain, then, and evident to all, that patience and resignation to the will of God, even in cases of the most distressing and depressing kinds, are at once our wisdom and becoming duty ;—as, viewed in this light, the afflictions and crosses of a present life, cannot fail, to beget in the soul that holy confidence and inward satisfaction, which must create a kind of heaven upon earth, “ from the pleasing and affecting consideration, that, “ whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”—Nay, more, that, although in many of their favourite pursuits, they may come far short of their intentions, and in others see their best endeavours rendered abortive by some unforeseen casualty, after they had considered their point as attained—they may yet, have some cause to rejoice, in their partial success in some matters, and in the certainty that, *in all, THE WILL WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR THE DEED.*

## CHAPTER VIII.

Good consequences of that part of the Christian doctrine, which was so powerfully inculcated by the Old Friar on his young auditor, in the Convent cell—And of that other part, or parts of it, so beautifully illustrated in the parables, &c. of the New Testament.—Reasons for congratulation and satisfaction in the exercise of our duty, although our success, in some respects, comes not up to our desires, and, in others, our exertions end only in disappointment.—Several instances, in my own particular case and experience, briefly noticed.—Still one great and comfortable reflection, the having done all in our power to ensure success.—And another, the grave, at last, a rest from our labours ; and, after the storms of time are o'er, a peaceful haven !—The cheering and animating consolations of religion go a step further, and extend our hopes and expectations beyond the concerns of time.—Reasons why, even at my time of life, I should yet be up and be doing.—I have still many imperious calls for exertion in the Winter of Life.—Substantial reasons, notwithstanding all this, why I should not complain.—Home-brought questions, and irresistible arguments against despair —Happy resolution in consequence, —Beautiful extract from Dr Cotton.—More pleasing prospects, exhilarating views, and delightful anticipations.—Appropriate prayer for the weary traveller as he approaches the goal of Life's Journey.—The last sacrifice, how it may be most acceptably performed.—The most suitable employment for a rational being, when the time of the evening oblation is come.—Earthly enjoyments, at such a season, poor comforters.—The best antidote against the afflictions, and crosses, and struggles, and storms of life, and particularly at the hour of death.—Beautiful and appropriate concluding extract from Addison.

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IF that part of the Christian doctrine, which was inculcated, and so powerfully inculcated, by the reasoning of old Friar Augustine, in his little sermon to the young impatient Englishman, who had been so providentially led to receive instruction in the convent cell, viz., “ That the miseries, the calamities, the heart-rendings, and the tears, which are so intimately interwoven, by the GREAT ARTIST, in our natures, as not to be separated in a single instance, are, in the first place, our security of a future state, and, in the next place, serve to slope the way before us, and, by gradual operation, fit our minds for viewing, with some sort of fortitude, that hideous chasm that lies between us and that state—DEATH !” —must go far to convince every one, not only of the reasonableness of endeavouring to bear up under the evils of life,

with patience and resignation, and of submitting to our lot, whatever it may be, with gratitude and thankfulness—so must those other parts of it, which are so beautifully illustrated and set forth, in the highly instructive parables of the talents, and of the good Samaritan, conjoined with that great and important truth, which Christianity teaches, in the New Testament, viz., **THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE WILL FOR THE DEED**—while they point out our duties, and the perils to which we are exposed, if we are either remiss in the performance of, or totally neglect these duties, at the same time bid us not be too much cast down, when we fail in our endeavours to be useful to our brethren of mankind, or meet, in our efforts, with only a partial success—in the hopes, that what we have only been able to accomplish in part, another will, in full; or, that, in the exercise of that charity, “which envieth not,” we may live to see the day, or, that others who shall live after us may see it, when our most sanguine schemes shall be carried into full and efficient effect, by those, whom Providence may be pleased to adopt, as the more suitable instruments of its will, in these respects.

In my own particular case, and humble experience, just to notice in a brief manner, those two incidents and occurrences already glanced at, although, if it were consistent with my present views and limits, to embrace and lay hold of a greater number of them, I might add, considerably, to the aggregate of such instances, I would observe—that, if I gave such early indications of my wishes, to have this part of the coast of the United Kingdom, furnished with an apparatus for saving the lives of shipwrecked seamen, similar to, if not exactly the same with, that now so generally approved of, only to have my hopes blasted in the bud, in the manner formerly noticed—and have lived to see that glorious appendage, to a maritime county, **THE LIFE BOAT**, and its necessary appurtenances, appendages, &c., which I was more fortunate in my endeavours, through the kind assistance of subscribers, in being able to procure, *first* fall into premature decay, by being allowed to lie by neglected, or not sufficiently attended to; and *then*, the establishment entirely broken up, and the whole apparatus, with the exception of that small

portion of it, adapted to the purpose of restoring suspended animation, and which was indeed a separate concern, brought to sale, and disposed of, as useless lumber.

Still, have I not the satisfaction to reflect, that I have lived to witness the *first* of these favourite schemes, brought to maturity by Captain Manby, and generally adopted along the coast, under the auspices of Government, and the *very*, or *almost very*, identical apparatus that I had made the attempt to get our shores provided with, at such an early period, brought into action, on the *very spot*, which *first* suggested to my juvenile mind, the possibility of the successful application of such an apparatus, in cases of shipwreck, as will be evident, by reading the following extract from *memo-randa* of shipwrecks, in the neighbourhood of Dunbar, under the head 1830, taken from the East Lothian Register for 1831 :—" The sloop Peggy, of Peterhead, from Newcastle, with coals, &c., complete wreck, crew saved by Captain Manby's apparatus—Tyne Sands ;\*—and, in regard to the Life Boat, the object, at one time, of so much of my attention and anxious solicitude, if *it* has been allowed, in my own days, to pass away as a dream, and a tale that is told—so that not a single stone of the house now remains, to point out the spot where it once stood, upon that little triangular piece of ground, formed by the wall of the church-yard on the one side, and the post road on the other, just adjoining the principal gate of entrance into our place of sepulture on the east side—yet, the recollection of that DREAM, must ever conjure up pleasing associations,—and that TALE, gives me reason to hope, were it only from the mournful fate of the reported *best* swimmer on board the PALLAS, who perished in the attempt to effect a landing by his own powers, on that lamented occasion, while many who were less expert in the art of swimming, were safely brought ashore and landed, by means of the boat—that, *more than the blessing of ONE ready to perish*, came that day, on the heads of those, who were instrumental,

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\* This is rather a singular coincidence, that the first successful attempt in the use of this apparatus, in our neighbourhood, should be on the *very spot*, where, I so keenly felt the want of such a thing, *thirty eight years* before. This says little for the rapid advance of the age, in *matters of humanity* !

either by means of their subscriptions, or otherwise, in procuring that useful, but ill-fated vehicle, for this part of the coast.

But, to turn to those matters, in which, as in some degree connected with the various branches of my profession, I was more directly concerned:—If the multitudinous host of my Cheap Tracts that issued from the Dunbar press—and the Cheap Magazine—and Monthly Monitor—and Affecting History of Tom Bragwell—and Popular Philosophy, or the Book of Nature laid open, upon Christian principles, &c.—that issued, from time to time, from the Haddington press,—have not been quite so well supported and encouraged, as I should have expected, from men possessed of property and influence, considering the objects these several productions were calculated to accomplish, in promoting “the interests of religion, virtue, and humanity,” as well as the “peace, comfort, and security of society,” and in which, the interests of the higher as well as of the lower orders, were consulted—still have I not the satisfaction to reflect, that, since the publication of my Cheap Tracts in 1802–3, the complexion of the contents of the hawker’s basket, has undergone a very sensible alteration, or material change to the better—that, since the publication of my Cheap Magazine in 1813–14, and my Monthly Monitor in 1815, a wonderful alteration in men’s minds, in respect to early prejudices and absurd opinions, has taken place—that, since the appearance of Tom Bragwell, we have had fewer delinquents of his description on our criminal records\*—and that, the publication of Popular Philosophy, has chimed so well in with, and been appreciated so fully by ONE very competent to judge of what was the prevailing TASTE OF THE AGE, that he considers it, as uniting “with the many and great engines now at work, to draw down learning from cloisters and colleges, and to diffuse it among the people, and make it subservient to their daily and best of interests.”†

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\* I take no particular merit in this;—it may be perfectly accidental, so far as my writings are concerned; but I mention facts as I find them, to whatever cause, or combination of causes, these facts may be imputed.

† See Inverness Courier, for October, 1826, being while Popular Philosophy was in course of publication, in Parts.

While, over and above all these, I may mention another, very great and lasting source of satisfaction, that I have derived from my literary labours, viz., the getting acquainted, and being brought into terms of correspondence, with many, of the most **ILLUSTRIOUS** characters of the day—accounting as such, those who have rendered themselves conspicuous by their labours of love to their species, as manifested in their acts of beneficence, humanity, and compassion, to their brethren of mankind. Not to dwell on the satisfaction I must derive from the consideration that even the Lord Chancellor himself, with his powerful band of coadjutors, are now only *beginning* to render themselves useful, in the way of dealing out *penny-a-week* information to the people, something in the way that I did, alone, and unsupported, otherwise than by the public, now twenty years ago,\* further than by saying, that, I trust, his Lordship will not forget his precursor *now*, should he, by these pages, be reminded of the circumstance—and on the compliment paid me for being in *advance of the age*, in that respect, by our unwearied modern journalists, the Messrs Chambers—and the still greater compliment of our more modern, and also industrious, **SCHOOLMASTER**, who, in one of his late numbers, in allusion to the Cheap Magazine, says, “It appeared about twenty years ago, and was as much, or more, for its day, than Chambers’ Journal, or Johnstone’s Schoolmaster, are now.”

And, if, my strenuous endeavours, and persevering efforts, in the way of my profession, have been the means of establishing the Book Trade on any thing like a permanent foundation in my native town—of diffusing, by means of so many irrigating streams as I have formerly mentioned, the waters of knowledge so plentifully over all the adjoining districts—of planting the printing press in East Lothian, a county, where never printing press, so far as I know, was ever planted before—and of contributing, to the still more extensive diffusion, of information and useful knowledge, among the middling and humbler classes of society all over the country, from, I may now

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\* It will be observed that the Cheap Magazine, at *fourpence* a month, with its supplementary number at the end of the year, just amounted to *one penny per week*.



say, the banks of the Tweed to the braes of the Doon,—and from the green shores of the Fleet, in Galloway, to the rugged rocks of the islands of Orkney—by means of, that extensive publication or canvassing concern, in which, I unhappily, became more latterly engaged—and all, alas! to so little purpose, or rather with such disastrous effects to myself;—Still, may I not look back with some degree of complacency, at the thought, that no person, under *similar* circumstances, *could* have exerted himself more, and *done* more, than I had done, to command success, and ensure a contrary result.

And although, at my time of life, I have little to expect, or to look for, in the way of being able to retrieve my affairs to any great extent—and have too much cause to expect, from what I have already and recently experienced, that my sufferings, from some *heart-rending causes, now in operation*, will end only in the grave—yet, there is one comfort left, even under this afflictive consideration, and that comfort, is kindly suggested, by that benign and holy religion, which, in so many ways, and on so many important and trying occasions, has borne me up, and been my consoler, in midst of a sea of woe, viz.,—that, in that grave, I may at last, after the storms of time are over, find a peaceful haven!

How consoling to one in my situation, such a consideration as this; for, although, to all appearance I must still be up and be doing for some time longer, if my health and my strength permit, in consequence of the great necessity that is *now*, after having passed the boundary of *threescore*, laid upon me to do so. Yet, I have already the indications, in my growing infirmities, and the lately increased weakness of my bodily powers, that I needed not the kind admonition in one of my mottos, to remind me that, “*this is not our resting place,*” that to me, in particular, a time is fast approaching when “no man can see to work;” and then, how sweet must be that repose, after the heat and the toil of the day is over, that shall remain unbroken by the noise of the troubler,—which shall remain undisturbed by the annoyances of time.

But, how much more consoling still, the pleasing and

animating reflection, that, in those mansions beyond death and the grave, to which, as I observed in a former chapter, "Religion points," with a smiling aspect, as the goal of my journey, when the concerns of time are closed, where, I may at last, obtain the fruition of those Heavenly hopes,—and fond desires,—and longings after immortality—that are, at once, our best antidote against despondency in the present life, and an earnest and evidence of a future state.

I have just said, that, to all appearance, I must still be up and be doing, for some time longer, if my health and my strength permit, and the reasons are obvious. I have been spared, it is true, to see the *sixtieth anniversary* of my birth, while many of my early companions on life's journey, have left me by the way, in consequence of being summoned to their long homes. I have still been spared to enter upon my *evening*, or Sexagenarian period, while many of those who accompanied me on the first part of my voyage, or have since launched to follow me on THE STREAM OF TIME, have been more expeditiously wafted forward by its currents, or swept by its rapids, into the boundless ocean of eternity !

But, it is not to be inferred from these, that my situation is one of the most pleasant, or most enviable description,—that, having so far accomplished my task, I have now nothing to do, but to fold my hands in sluggishness, and to recline at my ease on a bed of roses. No ! It has pleased the great disposer of events to lengthen out the days of my pilgrimage, while many of those who entered with me on life's career, or have since joined me in its progress,

" Sleep, who kept the world awake ;"

but it is *not*, that I may enjoy, in life's declining shades, that state of rest and repose, so desirable to the tired, and almost worn-out traveller, who has so long had to encounter its uphill acclivities, and tread in its lower grounds among briars and thorns.

It has, indeed, pleased the almighty Ruler of the universe, as yet, to keep my feeble and shattered bark afloat on the sea of life, but it is still, as it were, in the middle of the stream, and far distant from any convenient landing place,—still exposed to its storms and tempests, its eddies and whirls, and

without the near prospect of some friendly island, to welcome my approach,—some desired haven, to shelter me, from the discomforts and perils of the **WINTER OF AGE**.

To me, the **WINTER OF LIFE** has indeed come. Within these few months, I have assuredly had, many indications of the approach of its infirmities. The gay **SPRING** of life has to me passed, with all its allurements,—the **SUMMER** heats, although they beat hard upon me while they lasted, have now melted away before the frosts of age,—and the maturity of my **AUTUMNAL** exertions, have also given place to the chilling blasts, and benumbing grasp of hoary **WINTER**,—but I have still many duties to perform, still have I much to accomplish, for myself and others, should it please God to spare me,—still I have many, and imperious, calls for action; and, instead of being permitted, even at this advanced stage of human existence, to retire in peace from the busy scene, in order to enjoy some rest from my labours on this side of the grave;—or, what would be more desirable still, to a mind constituted as mine is, that I might find a little leisure for that delightful employment, than which, according to that excellent and pious philosopher, the Hon. Robert Boyle, there can be none more suitable to a rational creature; for, what can be more so, observes this profound and accurate reasoner, “than to employ reason to contemplate that **DIVINE BEING**, which is both the author of its reason, and noblest object about which it can possibly be employed,”—I find I must still be up and doing, and for other purposes and concerns, as well as my own, endeavour now, under so many disadvantages, to accomplish that, which, in a better state, a happier mood, and “fitter far, to play life’s subtle game,” I have been hitherto unable to effect.

Yes! The cry to me, at present, is, toil—toil—more toil, at the busy oar of life; and I may say of myself, as the Apostle said, in allusion to the necessity laid upon him to preach the Gospel, “**WOE UNTO ME IF I TOIL NOT, even at this late hour of my day—THIS COMMENCEMENT, AT ONCE, OF THE EVENING AND WINTER OF LIFE.**”

But I must not complain, notwithstanding all this. Bad as things may appear to be with me, still I am sensible they

might have been much worse. Bleak and dreary as the prospect is now around me, still it might have been more uncomfortable and cheerless,—severe and keen as have been the pangs I lately felt—bitter and unpalatable as are the dregs that still remain to be drunk, in my mortal cup, I have great reason to bless God, that they are not without the merciful admixture, of some of life's choicest and sweetest ingredients.

It has been observed by a favourite poet, who says much in little compass, and whom I have already, more than once, quoted, that

“ Poor is the friendless master of a world ; ”\*

but poorer, by far poorer, still, is he to be accounted, who, in the hour of severe distress, and after being stripped by the storm of adversity of his worldly goods, has no kind, no sympathising, friend, to boast of. Such, I have reason again to bless God, has never been the case with me. In all my misfortunes, and these pages will show, before I have done, that I have had my share, I have been soothed and borne up by the kind offices of friendship ; and, even now, that I have entered upon such an irksome, and (what would be to some minds) appalling EVENING TASK, I am not without the countenance of friends to encourage me to proceed ; and there is still spared to me, one precious boon, to afford me consolation, and to share, unrepining, my accumulated griefs, as well as to enable me, by being relieved from other duties, to prosecute that task, which, undismayed by so many forbidding and frowning circumstances, I have so arduously and fearlessly undertaken. To say that I am not alive to sentiments of the most profound gratitude for this favour, would belie the most cherished aspirations of my heart, and the feelings I may have occasion to give utterance to, before my present task is laid aside, by its completion.

Why, then, I would ask myself, should I despair ? Does not the same adorable Being who clothes the “ lillies of the field,” who “ feeds the ravens in the wilderness,” who suffers not a sparrow to fall to the ground, without his permission,—who proportions the trials and the sufferings of his ra-

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\* Young.

tional offspring, to their various capacities to endure, and abilities to bear up under them ; and has, in so many instances, consoled, and assisted, and supported myself, in the days of deep and sad adversity ? Does not the same wise and beneficent Being, I say, still bear sway, in the irresistible operations and purposes of his will,—still continue to sweeten the cup of human sorrow, and render it the more palatable, by an admixture of those choice antidotes, that HE knows so well, how to prepare, and how to apply ?

I would, therefore, on the present occasion, however lamentable, instead of using the words of despondency, adopt those of Dr Cotton, in his “ Happy Fireside,” as more expressive of my present feelings :—

“ To be resign'd, when ills betide ;  
Patient, when favours are denied ;  
Well pleas'd with favours given.  
This, only, is true wisdom's part ;  
This, is, that incense of the heart,  
Whose fragrance smells to Heaven.”

That Heaven, in which, I trust, all the seeming inequalities of a present life, shall be satisfactorily explained and accounted for,—that Heaven, where the long tossed with tempest, and not comforted, shall find that rest and comfort to their souls, which had been denied them here,—that Heaven, where all sorrow and suffering shall forever have an end, and all tears be finally wiped from all faces,—that Heaven, in short, WHERE THERE SHALL BE NO MORE DEATH ! but the happy soul forever “ from cumbrous matter freed,” shall be permitted to range free and unfettered, in the full activity and vigour of youth, that knows no bounds,

“ Through worlds and worlds, beyond the skies.”

In that more pure and perfect, and consequently more holy and happy state, and better fitted for intellectual employment, and intellectual enjoyments, I would humbly hope, the shortcomings in the way of duty, and the frailties and imperfections in the performance of it, which I have so often and so long exhibited here, shall no more be found to exist,—that the scales of ignorance, and films of prejudice, which have so long blinded my understanding, and led me into so many unhappy mistakes and errors, during my hour of pro-

bation below, shall be forever removed from my eyes,—and that, those numerous sources of vexation and sorrow, which have so often, and so long, distracted my attention from the most noble of all pursuits, “the contemplation of His WORKS—the GREAT—DIVINE;” and still continue to threaten, nay contribute their share, to bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave; and have made me assume, on more occasions than one, the mournful designation of “A MAN OF SORROWS, AND ACQUAINTED WITH GRIEFS,” will be forever done away, in the sensible fruition of THAT BEING, in whose presence there is fulness of joy—at whose right hand, “are pleasures ever more.”

May that wisdom ever be mine, that not only teaches patience and resignation, under all the disappointments and calamities of life, and heartfelt gratitude and thankfulness, for every blessing and mercy received, but the most unfeigned and sincere, though humble acquiescence, in all the dispensations of that ADORABLE BEING, who, by mingling so many mercies in my cup of mortal calamity, and having, in so many instances, to use a homely and familiar phrase, “made the back meet for the burden,”—given me so much reason to hope, that HE will never leave me, nor forsake me;—that as, His goodness and mercy, hath hitherto, been made to keep pace with my existence, and to follow me all the days of my life, HE will not now cast me off, when the diseases and infirmities of age have begun to overtake me,—that, even, when called to walk through the dark valley of the shadow of death, I need fear no evil, but humbly resign myself to His care and keeping, whose staff, and whose rod, even in this last extremity, can still bear me up,—whose blessed presence, can still comfort me,—

“For where his presence is, there must be joy.”

That so, the perpetual sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour, may ever arise from the living altar of my heart;—that aspirations of gratitude may be made continually to ascend up as incense from my lips—and, when my voice is lost, in the approaches of death, as it must soon be, and the time of my evening oblation is come, I may be the better enabled to render up my account with joy, by completing the sacrifice with

cheerfulness and alacrity, and in endeavouring to lisp, when utterance faileth,—

“ Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.”

Without such a principle as this, continually living and operating in us, what, alas ! would earth be, and all its enjoyments—at such a solemn, passing moment ? Poor comforters, indeed, to a soul immortal ! But, indeed, how empty and fallacious must they prove, even when the hope of life is not extinct, in a state of severe mental anguish, and excruciating bodily suffering !

A continual sense of the divine presence and favour, is, indeed, the best antidote against the afflictions, and crosses, and struggles, and storms of life—but particularly so against the fear of death. Of this no one seems to have been more sensible than the pious and enlightened Addison, with whose sentiments I shall conclude this, the last, of these introductory chapters to my “ Latter Struggles.” “ I know but one way of fortifying my soul,” says this excellent person, “ against those gloomy presages and terrors of mind, and that is, by securing to myself the friendship and protection of that Being, who disposes of events, and governs futurity. He sees, at one view, the whole thread of my existence, not only that part of it, which I have already passed through, but that which runs forward into all the depths of eternity. When I lay me down to sleep, I recommend myself to his care ;—when I awake, I give myself up to his direction.—Amidst all the evils that threaten me, I will look up to him for help, and question not but He will either avert them, or turn to my advantage.

“ Though I know neither the time, nor the manner of the death I am to die, I am not, at all, solicitous about it ; because, I am sure that He knows them both, and that He will not fail to comfort and support me under them.”

## CHAPTER IX.—1815.

The time WHEN my Latter Struggles may be said to have commenced.—How ascertained to have been just upon the eve of my passing the boundary line betwixt my forty-fifth and forty-sixth year.—Or, between the NOON TIDE and AFTERNOON of my life.—Lamentable consideration.—Sundry reasons for establishing the fact, that, these struggles had not commenced sooner.—Evidences of the happy composure and serenity of mind, in which, I entered the year 1815.—Little pleasant excursion to——Paper Mill.—Visit to a neighbouring village.—Ingenious piece of mechanism.—A memorial of the manner in which some of the French prisoners had been employed.—Favourite hobby of the public in those days.—The grateful scholars and schoolmasters dinner at Dunbar.—Who was the prime mover, or first suggester on the occasion.—The happy event again recorded.—Such exhibitions ought to be kept up.—Good consequences that may be expected to flow from them.—The schoolmasters a most deserving set of men.—Acknowledged obligations of the author to them.—A secret divulged of more consequence for them to know, than who wrote the Waverley Novels.—How the fact stands corroborated.—Other causes that may have contributed to the calm I seem to have enjoyed at this time.—Testimony of Lindley Murray to the utility of the Cheap Magazine, and favourable attestations of the Presbytery of Dunbar, as to the manner in which I had conducted it.—Prospects in *embryo*, or as yet in the distance.—Congeniality of my new task, to my habits and turn of thinking.

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THE exact time, when, these my SEVERE, and as I have styled them, “LATTER STRUGGLES,” commenced, may be pretty accurately ascertained, from irrefragable documents, not only from my own recollections, but from facts recorded in my late retrospections. From all of which it appears, that it must have been just upon the eve of my passing the boundary line betwixt my 45th and 46th year; or nearly the end of 1815, that this unhappy beginning, to my since long protracted series of sorrows, took place.

This is a lamentable consideration to be sure, that, at the very time when according to the natural course of things, to use the seaman’s expression, I should have been thinking of *turning in*, to indulge myself with my AFTERNOON’S nap, after having borne the burden and heat of my



laborious MID-DAY toils, I should be *called out* to more exertion than ever, in consequence of the tide of human calamity, all on a sudden, *setting in*, so strongly against me !

That the commencement of these severe struggles, as they must soon appear to have been, could not have happened sooner, is evident, from the happy temper and composed state of mind in which I entered upon this eventful year ; which, it will be seen, evinced any thing but that of a mind oppressed with care, or anxiety of any description.—The great extent of my dealings, and transactions, in course of its progress, almost down to its termination, which fully evidenced the high ground upon which I had all along stood in point of credit,—and the cheerfulness and alacrity, with which I went about my business, not only up to the period of the sale to which I shall soon have occasion to allude,—as taking place in Glasgow in the month of September ;—but, in the activity I displayed in promoting the interests of my canvassing business, in the month of October following ;—My sales in Dunbar, which I conducted and concluded with so much satisfaction in November and December ;—and the measures I adopted in course of the latter month towards the proper extension of my now already pretty widely extended publication business, by issuing the additions to my former list in that line, of two quarto pages, under date, December 1815,—all go to shew, that up to that time, supposed to be about the period that I published the concluding number of my Monthly Monitor, in the middle of the month :—I had, as yet, met with nothing peculiarly alarming, or of a sufficiently harassing nature, to interrupt or disturb my pursuits.

As one evidence of the happy composure and serenity of mind, in which I must have entered the year 1815, I may mention the little pleasant jaunt, or pleasure excursion as I shall call it, in which I indulged myself, accompanied by my partner, on a visit to our hospitable friends at — Paper Mill, towards the end of January—a matter, of whatever insignificance it may be thought by others, was rather something *extraordinary*, or out of the common way, with my accustomed habits, and no less so, with those of my help mate ;

who, although like the spouse of the Vicar of Wakefield, she was ever inclined to give me my own way in most things, yet was most tenacious of her own opinion, in regard to the propriety of, a pretty strong adhesion to her post at the back of the counter; from which, it no doubt required all my eloquence, to persuade her to sever herself, for the long period of two or three days!

There is one reminiscence attending that journey, by which a very amiable gentleman, one of the partners of the firm to which the friend that we visited at the time belonged, and who accompanied me to a neighbouring village, may possibly be brought to the recollection of it, should these pages meet his eye, and that is, the call he made in my company upon a certain ingenious watchmaker, who exhibited to us the operations of that amusing piece of machinery,\* which in the form of a display of inanimate horse racing and jockeyship, served as a memorial of the perseverance and ingenuity, as well as the manner in which they had disposed of their time, of some of the poor French prisoners, who had long been confined to, and but recently relieved from, their quarters in that neighbourhood.

But I am rather doing myself injustice to put down this journey *altogether* to the score of pleasure, for, the very circumstance of my having at the time visited that village, brings to my recollection, that I had *business* there to transact. I am also inclined to think that I devoted part of the time which was spent, both in going through and returning by Edinburgh (if we returned that way) to making enquiry about some matters connected with the canvassing or general publication line, which was then the favourite hobby of the public, (as the penny and three-halfpenny weekly periodicals are now) and to which, I had, it appears, been for some time previous directing my attention.

Another circumstance to which I would call the attention of my readers, as indicative of the composure of mind I en-

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\* I think his name was Allan, watchmaker in Pennycuik.

joyed in those days, was THE SCHOOLMASTER'S DINNER, as it was called, which took place soon after my return from the west, or, on the 2d of February, being CANDLEMAS DAY—a day, long accustomed to be set apart by our venerated teachers for juvenile pastime and frolic among their pupils, but which, on this occasion, was reversed, by their *old scholars*, or pupils of former times, giving a treat of merriment and rejoicing to them.

In this business I took a more active part, and stood in the capacity of prime mover, in a degree, which was not then, nor has since, previously to this announcement, been, I presume, generally known. That the *original suggestion*, however, came from me, I can with confidence appeal to my then worthy neighbour now at —, who, it will be recollected, bore a conspicuous part in the business of carrying the measure into execution; or should the memory of that worthy gentleman have failed him, I have the corroborating circumstance of the original list of names still in my possession.

But much as I venerated, and much as I esteemed my quondam teachers, and much as I was gratified at the time by seeing the measure carried so fully into effect, it is not to be supposed that ever the matter should have been so started or suggested by me, or that I should have felt such gratification by its adoption, had I *then*, experienced any share of that deep gloom, almost amounting to despondency, which overshadowed my mind a twelve month afterwards, or by the time, that the anniversary of that *happy* meeting, as it was universally acknowledged to be, came round in the following year.

A record of this happy event, I took care to put down in the Chronological Table, at the end of the February number of my MONTHLY MONITOR, then in course of publication, under the head of *The Grateful Scholars*; but, in order to give it another, and perhaps a better, chance to be handed down to posterity, as an example worthy of imitation, and to record the names of my much-respected teachers; or, as my worthy correspondent, of former times, the author of *Alphion*, or the *Country School-Boy*, would have expressed himself:—

" My honour'd friends, the patrons of my youth,  
 Beneath whose guiding eyes, in days of yore,  
 My opening mind first caught the rays of truth,  
 While toiling in the paths of classic lore."\*

I shall, with much pleasure, give the record a place in these pages also.

#### " THE GRATEFUL SCHOLARS.

" A very pleasant and gratifying spectacle was exhibited at Dunbar, on Thursday, the 2d instant, Candlemas day.

" A large party of gentlemen, many of whom had now families of their own, but who had formerly been the pupils of Mr JAMES WATTERSTON, (who had for some time back retired from his preceptorial labours, to a farm in the neighbourhood) ; Mr RICHARD COLTMAN, the present mathematical teacher ; or, of Mr DAVID WHITE, Rector of the Grammar and English School ;—dined together in Lorimer's inn, with these worthy gentlemen, as a commencement of an *annual* mark of respect.

" This, surely, was one of those scenes which the good and the wise must contemplate with pleasure, and is worthy of imitation throughout the kingdom : for, while it draws together more closely the companions of our early years in the bonds of amity and friendship, and does honour to the feelings of the scholars of *former times*, it cannot fail to beget a reciprocal affection in the breasts of the teachers ; the good effects of which must be experienced by their *present* charge ; who, also, may one day tread in the steps of their fathers, and not be unmindful of *the days o' langsyne*."—*See Monthly Monitor, for February 1815 ; or, page 115, vol. 1st.*

It was, indeed, a pleasing and gratifying spectacle, as mentioned above, and it became the more interesting at the time, when viewed as the commencement of a *series* of such spectacles : or, the first of an *annual* mark of respect to the *teachers* by the *taught*. How Mr ———, for the town, and Mr ———, for the country, did not avail themselves of the power committed to them, as Conveners of the next assem-

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\* See *Alphion ; or, the Country School-Boy*, page 285, vol. 1st, Cheap Magazine.

bly, by calling the members again together, on the following Candlemas, I know not ; and my mind was, at that time, too much engrossed by other matters, to do any thing, by the way of stirring up their remembrance, and thus, a matter begun so auspiciously and apparently so much to the satisfaction of all present, was allowed to drop.\*

Among other causes which may be supposed to have contributed, to the calm it appears I had enjoyed at this time, may be reckoned, perhaps, the satisfaction I must have felt in

\* This notice must, however, convince that highly-esteemed and much-respected individual, Mr RICHARD COLTMAN, the only survivor of his respected fellow guests on the occasion, that the writer of this, so far as circumstances allowed him, did, and has again done, *his* part of the highly becoming duty ; and if the repetition of the record, should be the means, of stimulating some other *grateful scholars*, to set such a business agoing, either in *this* or *other* quarters, it may readily be believed, that, by the circumstance, or circumstances, coming to his ears, the recorder shall not be without his reward. He acknowledges, with gratitude, the many obligations he lies under to that highly useful and respectable body of men, the SCHOOLMASTERS, not only in his own neighbourhood, but over many of the parishes of Scotland, many of whom, have been of great service to him, in the various publications in which he has been engaged.

If he can do any thing to promote, by this humble memorial, *their* comfort and happiness, he shall feel himself *happy*, as he considers it his duty, should he be enabled to do so.

Meantime, he will conclude this note, by communicating to the Parochial Schoolmasters throughout Scotland generally, a piece of information, which, in this age of mysterious divulgements, will, no doubt, surprise some of them, as much, as the declaration of the author of *Waverley*, did, the band of comedians and others assembled around him, on a certain memorable occasion ; although, in the declaration now about to be made, the writer lays no claim to any merit, whatever, in the business, farther than affording *house-room* to the gentlemen who assembled on the occasion,—and that is, that it was in the *LITTLE ROOM, off his back-shop*, the same now occupied by his son, over the way, and nearly opposite to his present residence, on a Saturday afternoon, that the small coterie of Country Schoolmasters met, and deposited, in 1797, that *little grain* of mustard-seed, which, as is now well known to most of them, has become, in the year in which I write, “*a great tree*,” under the designation of the “*Fund for the Relief of the Widows and Children of Burgh and Parochial Schoolmasters in Scotland* ;”—now affording a comfortable lodgment for many of such, amongst its numerous and still spreading branches.

Of the gentlemen who *then* met, the only survivor now, is Mr JOHN COCKBURN, my good old worthy acquaintance, the Schoolmaster of SPOTT, in our neighbourhood ;—the others were, Mr James Archibald, who died lately, schoolmaster of Gladsmuir, near Haddington, then of Whittingham, in Dunbar Presbytery ;—Mr James Inglis, late schoolmaster of Innerwick ; Mr William Welch, late of Stenton ;—and Mr George Fulton, late of Bowmore, in the Island of Islay, but who, at that time, taught the Dunbar Parochial side-school in the village of East Barns—a most worthy man, whose memory must ever stand high in my estimation ; and whose settlement of the account for printing 900 copies of the *first* circular, as it appears in my books in December 1797, must ever be held as a corroborating proof, that I am not mistaken as to the time. The business, afterwards, I think, went into the hands of Mr Cooper, of Dalmeny, who, of course, would employ his own printer.

bringing the task of the Cheap Magazine to a completion, followed by so many encouraging and flattering testimonies, against the influence of which, it is no easy matter for the human mind, whether well or badly constituted, to be sufficient proof; for, while minds of a certain description are susceptible of flattery, or that praise and fulsome adulation, to which, a little looking homewards, would convince them, they were not entitled, or had any right;—so there are others who must be conscious, from the uprightness of their motives, and the purity of their intentions, that the praise applied to them is neither unwarranted, nor ill-timed; and to affect insensibility, or the non-existence of the universal passion in their breast, upon such occasions, is certainly going too far on the other extreme. Be this as it may, and whether I deserved it or not, I frankly confess, that, it was not without much pleasure and gratification, that I found my labours rewarded by *so many pleasing testimonials*; and, when I found among the number, a person, whose name was, at that period, so extensively known, and stood so high in the literary and scholastic world, as the highly respected, for his literary abilities, and justly-esteemed, for the amiable qualities of his heart, the late LINDLEY MURRAY, who, in speaking of the above-mentioned publication, is thus pleased to express himself:—"It appears to him to be well adapted to promote instruction and improvement among the lower orders of people; and he hopes the Editor will reap the reward in his own bosom, not only from a consciousness of his benevolent intentions, but from assured information that the books have been actually beneficial to many."—That I had been assured from various quarters, that my volumes had been "beneficial to many," I need not here repeat; and when, to crown all, I had just received the following short, but pithy, testimonial, of date the 8th February, from the reverend gentleman, who, as Moderator at the time, signed the minute of the reverend the Presbytery of Dunbar, of date 3d February 1813, which I have availed myself of, among my printed testimonials, as the *first* given in my favour, it would, indeed, be too much for me to affect to say, that I did not feel somewhat elated.

*"You have completely obtained the object you had in view, in the whole of the publication, and the manner you have conducted it, redounds very much to your credit."*

(Signed) JAMES STIRLING.

But, as the mere prospect of a state of quietude, or rest from my labours, even when attended with such comfortable reflections, as a consideration of the above, must have produced, could not be supposed to have any great effect upon a mind, so ardent, and habituated to activity, as mine had been, I do not think it would be going too far to say, that the contemplated possibility of my soon embarking more largely in the general publication line, about which, it will have been observed, I had already been making some enquiries, if not preparations, in my journey to the West,—might have rather the effect of raising, than depressing, my spirits, when there were so many golden prospects in the distance, in case they were not already sufficiently so, by the congeniality of the new task, I had now entered upon, to my accustomed habits, and long-established way of thinking, in the *Monthly Monitor*, which, as coming more particularly among the things of 1815, requires a little more notice, than, in this chapter, I have room to take, and shall, therefore, defer a consideration of it to the next.

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## CHAPTER X.—1815 (CONTINUED.)

The *Monthly Monitor*, or *Philanthropic Museum*, may be viewed in the light of a continuation of the *Cheap Magazine*.—Extracts from its title and from my original address.—Opinion of Mr James Graham, late of Berwick-upon-Tweed.—Lines to his memory.—The conducting of such a work as the *Monthly Monitor*, must have been a pleasing task.—Several circumstances must have conspired and contributed to my serenity of mind at this time.—My worldly affairs prosperous and flourishing.—My acquaintances and correspondents of the truly great and illustrious kind.—Other motives for pleasing reflection in the Spring of 1815.

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THE MONTHLY MONITOR, OR PHILANTHROPIC MUSEUM, which followed in the wake of the *Cheap Magazine*, by being pub-

lished in the year 1815, as I observed before, may be considered in the light of a continuation of its predecessor ; but as the period of my life upon which I have now entered, is subsequent to the time of the publication of the Magazine, and does not afford me an opportunity of saying more here in regard to the nature, design and tendency of that work, than can be extracted from the testimonies quoted in its favour, I shall proceed, to give my readers, some idea of the publication now more immediately under consideration. And the best way, I conceive, I can do this, is, by the following extracts from the title page of that work, and from my original address to the public, on the occasion of its announcement. And in order to shew, how my *new* labours were appreciated or held in estimation, by those who had an opportunity of seeing the numbers as they were progressing, about the time under consideration ; I shall also insert, a short extract, from the letter of a most amiable and worthy character, but who had some reason to complain of the buffets of fortune as well as myself,—of date, the 18th June, and which, of course, embraced all the numbers that had been previously published.

Of the complexion of the title, the reader may form a pretty good idea, from the following abstract, being an exact copy of it, as it appeared in its condensed or abridged form, on the advertisement issued on the appearance of the first number in January 1815.

*Just published, and to be had, &c. No. I. Price Sixpence.*

OF THE

# MONTHLY MONITOR & PHILANTHROPIC MUSEUM:

BEING A CHEAP REPOSITORY FOR

HINTS, SUGGESTIONS, FACTS, AND DISCOVERIES INTERESTING TO HUMANITY ;

AND FOR

PAPERS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION HAVING A TENDENCY TO PREVENT

## THE COMMISSION OF CRIMES,

*Counteract the baneful effects of pernicious sentiments and bad example ;*

ENCOURAGE A SPIRIT OF INDUSTRY, ECONOMY AND FRUGALITY

AMONG THE MIDDLE AND LABORIOUS CLASSES ;

AND

*Promote the Religious, Moral, Intellectual, and Physical Condition of Man.*



And the general idea of the work as it is developed in the original address, as follows, will speak for itself :—

“ With regard to the nature of the work in general, it is not sufficient to say that it will admit nothing inimical to religion or morality : or, in other words, that has a tendency to turn a man aside from the duty he owes to his God and his neighbour.—It professes to have a *positive* good in view.—By encouraging men to devote their time, their talents, and abilities, to the service of their *brethren whom they have seen*, it gives them a better opportunity of demonstrating their love to that *GOD whom they have not seen*. By contributing, in the smallest degree towards the prevention of crimes, and counteracting the baneful effects of pernicious sentiments and depraved habits, it will do something, it is presumed, to the *establishment of individual security*, as well as *cementing more firmly the social fabric* ;—and, in promoting the religious, moral, intellectual, and physical condition of man, it certainly will render him the most *essential services*.

The CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE, by appearing in each number, and bringing facts under review when they shall have recently occurred, must likely make, and keep up, a more lively impression on the mind, than if they had been suffered to collect and lie over for any length of time. In this view of the subject, they may be considered as *living monitors* ; and a table composed of such materials cannot indeed fail to become a valuable acquisition in every family, and to deserve the appellation assigned it, by serving the purpose of a faithful and *perpetual Beacon* while it lasts, to warn the careless and unwary of their danger ;—the necessity of him that standeth to take heed lest he fall ;—and the awful punishment, that *even in this world*, awaits the perpetration of crime. It may also be added, that while a continued list of Patents, Inventions, and Discoveries, must serve as a stimulus to the *inventive* faculty ; frequent instances of disinterested virtue and active benignity, must operate as an impulse to rouse the dormant powers of philanthropic spirits, and excite them to action by the contagion of example.

“ This work, it must be observed, is not confined to any particular class or order of society ; neither is it calculated

for any peculiar age or condition in life.—ITS OBJECT IS GENERAL AND COMPREHENSIVE ; and although neither the interests of the rich nor of the poor shall be overlooked, or those of the old and the young be forgotten in the progress of the work, yet, as much of the matter will be found well suited to the perusal of the *middling and industrious orders of mankind*, it may be said to be peculiarly adapted to the *agricultural, manufacturing, mechanical, and trading* branches of the community.

“ ‘ How many instructive truths are known in HUSBANDRY, in MANUFACTURES, and HANDICRAFT TRADES,’ it has been judiciously remarked, ‘ that have not yet appeared in print ; and how numerous are those that may be extracted from books, by far too expensive for a plebeian library.’—As it will be part of the object of the Editor of the present undertaking, to collect some of these USEFUL and INSTRUCTIVE TRUTHS, and to communicate them to the public ; it is hoped this will render it particularly acceptable to the more *ingenious* and *thinking* part of the community, and induce them to favour him with their good offices, in his new attempt to be useful ; by not only endeavouring to promote the success of the publication to the utmost of their power, but by communicating from time to time, as they may come to their knowledge, any *new inventions, improvements, or discoveries*, by which human life can be rendered more comfortable—the evils of this probationary state more tolerable—and the condition of their poorer brethren in any degree ameliorated.”

The gentleman from whose letter to me, of date, the 18th June, 1815, I am about to take the quotation formerly alluded to, is no other than that illustrious individual, *according to my vocabulary*, whose portrait, I believe, now graces the Town Hall of Berwick-upon-Tweed, where he had long been one of the free and independent burgesses, in the truest and most literal sense of the word. And where (according to some beautiful lines inscribed to his memory, and copied from under a most appropriate and suitable device by a young gentleman in the establishment of the East Lothian Banking Company, in this place,) he departed this life in the month of June in the following year. The extract from the

letter of this good man, in allusion to the few numbers of the *Monthly Monitor* he had yet seen, is as follows :—" I am much pleased with your publication. All your selections appear to me to be well chosen, and certainly in the genuine spirit of Christianity. I have often wished to send you something, but demands of that nature increase upon me while my health and strength decrease." Little, ah ! little did I think when I received that letter, concluding, as it did, with wishing me " every success," that it might be the last I should ever receive from that much esteemed correspondent, although, indeed, I am uncertain if it was written previously, or subsequently to, his indulging me with a sight of *his favourite hobby*, at the time, by accompanying me to the end of *the new pier*, as far as it was then built, on a fine morning before breakfast, the precise year, or time of the year, I cannot recollect. Little did I think, I say, that that letter might be the last, or that the kind expression of his wishes towards the end of it, might be regarded in the light of his dying valediction—his last farewell.

As it is not, however, every day that we meet with such characters, as this worthy and highly meritorious individual, so much respected by those who knew him, I shall take the liberty to insert, in these pages, the beautiful lines above alluded to, just noticing that the appropriate device at the top, consists of a plain monument, supposed to cover the body, with this inscription, on the side that meets the eye—

" The memory of the just shall be blessed ;"

with an urn placed on the top, overshadowed by the foliage of some weeping willows :—

## LINES, INSCRIBED TO THE MEMORY OF

**Mr James Graham,**

OF BERWICK UPON TWEED,

WHO DIED, JUNE 1816.

Condemned to Hope's delusive mine,  
 As on we toil from day to day,  
 By sudden blast, or slow decline,  
 Our social comforts drop away.

Crowned with good works, and full of days  
 See GRAHAM to the tomb descend :  
 Shall we refuse our choicest lays,  
 To mourn the patriot, and the friend.

Unawed by power, unwarped by fear,  
 Despising base Corruption's bribe,  
 He kept his steady purpose here,  
 Regardless of the courtier tribe.

Yet shall his memory be revered,  
 Nor perish with the vulgar throng :  
 To him a monument be raised,  
 By those who marked his virtues long.

There, like the veteran chief of old,  
 Our future patriot's shall lie,  
 And swear upon his hallowed mould,  
 Freemen to live, or bravely die.

Spurning Corruption's base controul,  
 Each generous feeling warmed his breast ;  
 Benevolence adorned his soul,  
 In virtuous actions only blest.

What though his lot on earth was low,  
 And partial fortune sometimes frowned,  
 Each virtuous project here below,  
 In him a ready champion found.

None e'er, in vain, his aid implored ;  
 His pen, his tongue, were free to all,  
 Though fate denied the glittering hoard,  
 His heart beat high at Friendship's call.

Thus passed his useful life its round,  
 Soothed all his cares, nor left a void,  
 And sure, the Almighty Master found  
 His various talents well employed.

Rest, ardent spirit, in the tomb,  
 Thy labours o'er, thy virtues crown'd ;  
 Around thy grave sweet flowers shall bloom,  
 And heart-felt sighs be breathed around.

*Transcribed by G. F. G——p. for Mr G. Miller, Dunbar.*

The conducting of a work, of the description of the Monthly Monitor, must have been to me a pleasure, instead of a burden ; and it will be observed by those, who will take

the trouble to look to the first paper, in the first number, that I embraced an early opportunity of identifying that work with its predecessor, by commencing with "A Tale from Real Life," a paper that had been sent by a much respected correspondent, for the purpose of insertion in the Cheap Magazine, and which, from espousing the cause of the poor and long-injured African, must have chimed well in with the ideas I then entertained, as well as, at a more early period of my life ;—while the leading paper in the February number, under the head " Wonders in the Heavens ; or, Astronomy Improved," from my own pen, must have been much in accordance with my sentiments and pursuits, at a period earlier still.

So that I had several things conspiring, or contributing, at the same time, to produce that calm which seemed to have taken possession of my mind, previous to the beginning of April ; and it would appear, that nothing had occurred to disturb my tranquillity, up to the period where my chapter leaves off ; and how, indeed, could it be otherwise, considering how happily I was situated at the time, in other matters.

It is true, that in regard to worldly prosperity, I cannot look back to that happy period, and say, in the words of the Eastern Patriarch, that " I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil ;" but I certainly had wherewith to have been more profuse, than I was at the time, in many respects, if I had been less economical for the future, a matter I never seem to have lost sight of, however things have turned out against me ; and in the enjoyment of my two now well established businesses in Haddington and Dunbar, I may say, that not only the *rock*, but the *rocks*, poured me out a plentiful means of subsistence, independent of the many tributary streams that were now flowing in from so many other sources.

It is true, that although few persons, I believe, who know me and my exertions, up to that period, would be disposed to dispute the palm of diligence in business, and laborious exertion, in the way of my various professions, with me. Yet I had not arrived at that honour or dignity predicted by Solomon, when he said, " Seest thou a man diligent in business, he shall stand before kings ; he shall not stand be-

fore mean men." Yet I had, by that time, arrived at the honour of standing before, and intimately conversing and corresponding with, the MAN whom it delighted even kings to stand before, or they would not have made such an exception in his favour, as it appears they did during the sitting of the Congress at Vienna: \*—and, in getting acquainted through the medium of my literary labours, with such illustrious individuals as THAT PERSON, and some others whose names I have already mentioned, or may hereafter have occasion to mention, in the annals of humanity, I certainly cannot be said to have stood, in the mind's eye, before mean men, so far as "true worth" is to be considered as "elevated place," and dignity of mind, superior to any accidental circumstance attending the manner, or matter of our birth;—and, it is also true that, however I may have been taught from my youth, to admire the conduct of the man of Ross, alluded to on a former occasion, I had not up to that period, nor have indeed ever since, been able to imitate him in his benevolent and praiseworthy actions; for, no woods clothing "the sultry mountain's brow,"—no limpid streams where water had never before been seen to flow—no useful causeway, parting "the vale with shady rows"—and accommodating "seats, the weary traveller to repose,"—marked my progress, and put it in my power to draw forth from spectators the exhilarating plaudits of

"Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue  
What all so wish—but want the power to do."

Still I had the consolation, at that time, to reflect, that in certain cases, formerly alluded to, I also had been instrumental in planting *useful trees*, and in causing the irrigating

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\* I here refer to the anecdote related in the papers of the time, in respect to this meritorious individual, being the same I had occasion to allude to in my first note at page 54.

The precise words of the anecdote, I do not recollect, but it is to the following purport, viz. That when the Duke of Wellington, upon some urgent occasion, during the sitting of the Congress at Vienna, in 1815, wished to see the Emperor Alexander, without going through the usual ceremonious etiquette, the sentinel peremptorily refused to admit him, even after he had informed him as to WHO HE WAS, assigning as a reason, that his orders were to admit no person so unceremoniously, be who he might, except Mr —, the Quaker, as he was pleased to style that worthy personage; not being aware, no doubt, that in using his name with such a designation attached to it, the usual appellation of *Master* might have also been dispensed with.

streams of *useful waters*, to flow where never such trees grew nor waters flowed before—that I too, in my humble way, had borne a *helping* hand in getting a more convenient medium of communication opened up betwixt our northern metropolis and my native town, than it had before experienced,\* and had done what *I could*, and as much as lay in my power, as has been already noticed, to provide a vehicle and other means of safety, by which the shipwrecked mariner might be relieved from his perilous situation, and brought on shore to enjoy repose, beyond the reach of conflicting elements, after his weary and weather beaten form had *almost* sunk beneath their fury—all of which matters must have had their share and effect in tranquillizing my mind, and contributing to that happy serenity which I, at that time, enjoyed.

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\* I here allude to the little aid I was enabled to afford *Mr Laidlaw*, in the way of undertaking the agency, in this quarter, on the establishment of *his coach*, in the Autumn of 1804, being the *first* regular daily conveyance betwixt Dunbar and the metropolis, that could be with certainty depended on: and before which time, it was no unusual practice for the lieges of our little burgh and neighbourhood, in order to avoid the risk of a tumble from a stumbling hack in Musselburgh water, or elsewhere, to walk up to Haddington on a morning,—take the coach there, if room,—and return to Dunbar in the same manner, on an evening,—after the arrival of the afternoon coach, from Edinburgh, at Haddington.

This mode of travelling in those days, may give our moderns a better idea of the comparative comfort they now enjoy, and the obligations they lie under to Mr Laidlaw for taking the lead, and being the *first* to set on foot such a mode of conveyance:—for the coaches from the south, *then, as now*, however regular in the arrival, and excellently conducted, as they have uniformly been, could not be depended on till their arrival, which must frequently have occasioned disappointment.—For myself, I can only say, that I undertook the agency, and did all I could to promote the interests of Mr Laidlaw's concern from its commencement as above, and continued to conduct it till its termination, (long after the death of Mr L. himself,) in September, 1831,—being for the long period of nearly twenty-six years.—With what advantage to the public can be best appreciated from the circumstance, that, of all the mistakes or loss of parcels that may have occurred, *during the whole of that time*, not one was ever brought home to the office at Dunbar. And, with what satisfaction to my employer, may be learned from the following extract from the letter of the son of the proprietress, when acknowledging the receipt of my last settlement, in regard to that concern:—

HADDINGTON, 20th September, 1830.

MY DEAR SIR,

I now return you the book discharged, and it affords me infinite pleasure in being able to state, that during the long period you have acted as my mother's agent, she has found your assistance invaluable, and while others have often given great trouble, with you there never has been the slightest difference, but that, you have uniformly acted in the most zealous and conscientious manner.

(Signed) H. LAIDLAW.

Addressed, Mr George Miller, Dunbar.

## CHAPTER XI.—1815. (CONTINUED.)

Happy and comfortable state in which I was placed, on the forenoon of Tuesday the 11th of April, 1815.—How my family were distributed, and then employed.—No example of idleness from me.—Affectionate testimony of a dutiful son.—How I would, most likely, be employed myself at the above time.—No chance of my being found in a state of idleness.—The door of my little apartment is opened.—A stranger is ushered in.—Under what designation and circumstances he introduces himself.—A question to my reader.—Another question put and answered.—Sundry effects traced to secondary causes, but still the question respecting the primary, or great first cause, remains the same.—I had no previous acquaintance with the stranger thus abruptly introduced to me.—Do not think I ever exchanged words, or had any correspondence with him before that call.—Manner in which I received him, naturally to be expected, from various considerations.—The turn our conversation as naturally took.—The result, before we parted.—After transactions.—What may occasion surprise at first, need not, after certain considerations.—One important consideration not to be overlooked.—Must have felt pleased and satisfied with my bargains.—My conduct in consequence.

SUCH, precisely, was the situation in which I was placed in respect to temporals, when, sitting quietly in the little room off my back shop, on the forenoon of Tuesday the 11th day of April, 1815.

My eldest son had not as yet returned from a journey, on which he had been transacting business, previously to our carrying into execution some contemplated alterations in the concern at Haddington, that we intended to make at the ensuing Whitsunday.

My second son, was at a distance, ploughing the ocean, on his way to India, in the exercise of a profession, which, at the time, seemed highly congenial to his wishes ; and, as appeared from his sailing letter, written from the Downs, on the eve of his departure, in which, he found himself very comfortably situated, on board the ————.

My third son, who was, at the time, bringing forward to assist me in the business at Dunbar, but who acted as a kind of *corps de reserve* on many occasions, would, no doubt, be at Haddington, superintending the business, in the absence of his brother.



While the younger branches of the family, three in number, would most likely, at that time of the day, be engaged at school or otherwise, in the way of fitting themselves for the several useful vocations, in which, they were afterwards destined to engage when they came to act their respective parts on the busy stage of life. For, if any of my family ever proved, or may yet prove, negligent or deficient in the performance of their industrious duties, they will not have me to blame, either in respect to precept or example. Of this, my eldest son seemed to be fully sensible, when he wrote his letter to me, of the 20th April, 1811, previously to his setting out on any of those journeys of improvement, which I deemed it necessary he should undertake, before entering upon the management of the business at Haddington;\* and, certain it is, that, up to that date, I had given him no occasion to alter his opinion, nor indeed, ever since.

My faithful partner, there is as little doubt, as in any of the other matters, would be at her post in the shop;—when, as I said before, I was sitting quietly in the little room adjoining, on the forenoon above mentioned. The particular business I was engaged in at the moment, I cannot distinctly recollect at this distance of time; but, as I see this must have happened a few days previous to the day of publication of the April number of the Monitor, it is very probable, I might then, have been employed in looking over a proof or revise of the concluding form of that number; or, it may be, as the May number was on the eve of going to press—and I see I wrote pretty largely in that number myself—I might be in the act of preparing some of the materials for it.

Be this as it may, it is not at all probable, that a person who

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\* Of this, the following extract from that letter, is the best evidence:—  
 “Should either I, or any of the junior part of your family, turn out useless members of society, we cannot plead bad example our excuse. Trained up to early habits of industry and piety, we have my mother and you for our patterns;—indefatigable and persevering in your respective spheres, we see you with admiration. And that both of you may long be a blessing, as well as honour to us, is the sincerest wish and prayer of your most devoted son,” &c.

But, indeed, the whole of that letter redounds so much to the credit of the feelings and sentiments of the writer at the time, that I almost regret that certain considerations, such as want of room, &c. prevent me from giving it entire. As it is, it has been carefully preserved, as a memorial of filial respect, and an early sense of duty, in one who signs himself, my “most devoted son.”

had often, no doubt, declared before, as he must have often been heard to declare since, that "he never knew what leisure is," was found in a state of idleness, or trifling away his time in any manner whatever,—when the door of the little apartment opened,—and Mrs M. ushered in a stranger, who soon introduced himself as a Mr ———, of the town of ———, adding, that, in travelling through, accompanied by his wife, the latter had felt herself so much fatigued or indisposed, that he was obliged to let her lie down in the adjoining inn, to take a little repose before proceeding further, and that he had just stepped in, in the interim, to while away the time by a little chat with me.

And here, I would just put the question to my reader—let him call this interview providential, accidental, by chance, or what he pleases—Is it possible to conceive a case, which one of the parties, at least, had less a hand in bringing about, and in which the other party, according to his own statement, as reported above, had *nearly* as little?—and to what is the circumstance, therefore, to be imputed, but to that overruling power, or providence, in the affairs of which, the smallest matters, are sometimes made to produce the most unexpected or extraordinary results; and, in this instance, paved the way, among whatever *benefits*, or *goods*, were meant to flow from it,—for those *inextricable* difficulties, in which I so soon afterwards found myself involved,—and those severe tasks, that have since, made my latter days drag so heavily along.

But, is not this, some may reply, making the Almighty the author of evil, strictly so called, and imputing that to a Divine impulse or interference, which had far better, and more consistently with that humility so becoming in humanity, be imputed to error or indiscretion—the too prevalent infirmities of our nature. To this, I answer—not more so, than the Old Testament doctrine of the influential cause of Joseph being sold into Egypt, or the after fortunes of his brethren, in the time of the great famine; and the New Testament doctrine of the poor man who journeyed from Jerusalem to Jericho, having fallen among thieves, just at the very time, when, "by chance, there came down a certain priest that way," to pass by on the other side; and that good

Samaritan journeyed also, whose very different conduct has been held out as a lesson of tolerance and forbearance in religious matters, and of good will to men of all nations and sentiments, in all ages;—and should it, afterwards appear that the extension of my publication business over the distant quarters of the north, and through the islands of Orkney, has been productive of some good to my fellow men—or, if in consequence of my extensive book sales through the southern districts of Scotland, it should so turn out, that I had been in any degree instrumental, in furnishing the son of AN AFRICAN KING, with the great acquisition, he is said with some difficulty to have achieved, at Hawick, even at the low price it was there sold at, in the purchase of a Greek Lexicon\*—or that, the publication of my Popular Philosophy, has deserved half of the encomiums that have been bestowed upon it, in consequence of its adaptation to the purposes for which it was intended—there will be evidence furnished by and by, and in the course of these pages, to shew, that ALL must be imputed to circumstances arising out of, or connected with, the events of this, to me, memorable day; however affecting and disastrous they turned out in their developement—no less so, than that the publication of my Cheap Magazine may be traced to the catastrophe of the three boys who were executed at Edinburgh, in the early part of 1812—the bringing out the affecting story of Tom Bragwell, in the complete form in which it appeared in the autumn of 1821, to the after delinquencies of the David Haggarts, and other juvenile depredators of that latter period;—or, to compare great things with small, or the origin of mighty events with those of a more humble nature—the bloody conflicts that took place in our own neighbourhood and other parts of these kingdoms, at the time of the Usurpation of Oliver Cromwell, may be placed to the account of that *unfortunate* embargo, which prevented that person from having his *own way*, at such a critical juncture, when meditating his escape to America.

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\* See the very interesting account of THOMAS JENKINS, in No. 46 of Chambers' Journal, that I have just seen, and which reminds me of the auctions I had going on, and which will be afterwards noticed, at a time, that may possibly answer better for further allusion to the above very interesting narrative.

I do not mean it, to be inferred from this, that I was led far less forced, into the publication business, merely by Mr ——'s call ; but as I seem to have been no way particularly pressing about the business previously to that call, and might not have engaged in it for some time afterwards, if he had not called, the probability is, that, as matters turned out afterwards, I might never have engaged in it at all ; and then, as it will soon be seen, what a world of trouble and protracted toil and suffering would have been saved to myself ?

To proceed with my narrative:—Although I was not personally acquainted with the gentleman previously ; indeed, I am not aware of having ever exchanged words, or had any correspondence with him before. Yet, from the plausibility of his motives for calling—the kind of clanship that subsists betwixt individuals of the same profession, especially where so thinly scattered—and my desire to have a little chat with a person whose fame as a printer I had heard so much extolled, and whom besides, in consequence of having recently embarked in the same line himself, that I was at the time beginning to make some enquiries about, (the general publication business) which, in consequence of the great success the ——, the ——, and other Companies had met with, was becoming the favourite hobby of our most industrious and enterprising booksellers, I must have considered, as very competent to give me some information on that, to me then, important subject, —it may readily be believed, that I would at once give him a hearty welcome, and feel disposed to let all other matters with which I had been engaged previously to his entry into my little presence-chamber, stand still, during his short continuance—and it may as readily be supposed, that whatever Mr ——'s motives might have been for calling, the publication business, from what I have just mentioned, would soon become the subject of our conversation.

It did, and Mr ——'s answers to all my queries were apparently given with so much frankness and candour—his disposition to serve me, and to supply me with such books as he either printed himself or could procure for me, upon terms that I could not think but liberal, in the event of my making up my mind, or feeling inclined to enter upon the same line,

providing I did not encroach upon certain districts he was already operating upon, and which he pointed out, was so manifest,—the prospects he held out in certain quarters which he also mentioned, and was quite disposed to leave to me, if I chose, to take possession of them, so encouraging—and the monthly, or other, almost ready money remittances which he taught me to expect, and which he gave me to understand he was in the habit of receiving from ———, and other quarters, where he had got his business established himself, was so flattering, I may rather say tempting,—that, before we parted, I had become a *whole*, instead of a *half convert* to the propriety of embarking in a concern, that held out such bright and golden prospects ;—and he, had whiled away the time that his good lady's short repose gave him, by disposing of to me, property in books finished and unfinished, to a very considerable amount,—and which, by the month of July, I see was still more increased by other additions.

I rather think, that it was in course of that conversation also, that the proposal was started, for me to take a share in the impression of a new edition of ———, which he had just put, or was about putting to press, under very flattering prospects, and which, I observe, was afterwards carried into effect, by an exchange of missives in the month of August following, previously to the delivery of the first number of the work, as I see, that in order to induce me the more readily to go into the measure, the work was to be forwarded to me in sheets as printed, that I might avail myself of it also in the number concern ; and with a book of such paramount utility as I considered it to be, and which belief, I took some pains in an early advertisement to impress upon the public, I certainly expected the demand for that particular article would have been of itself considerable.

I had other transactions with the same gentleman, and some of them of a pretty extensive nature, in course of the year, but I have been the more particular in noticing the circumstances attending this, our first interview and commencement of our transactions, from the results that followed, and, as it seems to have been also the commencement of a new epoch in the history of my life.

Were the extent of this my first purchase from Mr — made public, ~~SOME~~ of my readers would no doubt wonder at my temerity, in concluding a bargain or bargains, to such an extent at one down sitting. But while the readiness of Mr — to make the proposal, shews, in what light my credit stood at the time.—I may say further for myself, What was a purchase of — worth, upon liberal terms of credit to me, when I can shew by my books and other documents, that my *weekly* receipts at that flourishing period, would have covered the whole in two or three months—when I could at any time, upon an emergency, raise as much in the same time by means of my wholesale sales to the trade—when I had as a reserve two great friends at Court, ready to assist me on any occasion, that I might consider it of advantage to avail myself of their services;—and when, I had besides another friend, at not a hundred miles distance, who made me welcome to command his services, to the extent of his purse, or his means, at any time;—and when, let that consideration never be forgotten, the being put in possession of so many complete works, and such a respectable collection to begin with in the number line, must have enabled me to open up ~~NEW~~ resources, and to widen considerably those which I had previously been in the habit of availing myself of.

Instead, therefore, of desponding over, I felt pleased in the success of my bargains, and as it was not to be supposed that one of my ardent temperament, was to allow his energies to remain dormant, with encreased engagements on his head, it will speedily be seen, that I did not do so, but with alacrity, adopted a quite different course.

## CHAPTER XII.—1815. (CONTINUED.)

After having completed some previously contemplated arrangements, I lose no time in evincing a disposition, not to loiter by the way, under my new engagements.—First volume of my *Monthly Monitor* completed.—Mrs Grant's recommendatory notice in her *Popular Models*, then just published.—Sale to the Trade, in Edinburgh, on the 13th of July.—John Knox's head-piece, or skull cap.—Great success of that sale.—One purchaser had better have been absent.—Men blind to future events; happy ordination in the course of things that it is so.—Commence my publication business, on a small scale, in July.—A little more extended in August.—Catalogue sent out, preparatory to my sale to the Trade, in Glasgow.—Become seriously indisposed.—My indisposition ascribed, by a friend, to the old cause,—over-exertion.—Extracts from my friend's letter.—His friendly admonitions, cautions, and advice, kindly taken, but found to be impracticable at the time.—A severe blow, not calculated to mend the matter.—Set out for Glasgow, on Monday the 4th of September.—The sale takes place on the 6th and 7th.—Is pretty successful.—Complimented with the *FREEDOM OF THE TRADE*, in the city of Glasgow.—My exertions on the day previous to the sale.—If there had not been a respectable turn out, it would not have been my fault.—A laborious week for me, upon the whole; but no rest, or respite, during the next.—Journey to Newcastle.—A very warm day, succeeded by a cold frosty night.—Tempting fires not to be come at.—My business at Newcastle.—Progress made in my new line, by the 1st of October.—The wheels in motion, upon a pretty extensive scale.—Things continue to go on prosperously.—My November and December sales in Dunbar, turn out well.—The *Monthly Monitor* brought to a conclusion.—Some allusion to, but no positive promise given, in regard to a quarterly publication.—Issue an addition, or supplement, to my general publication Catalogue, dated December 1815.

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THE arrival of my son from his journey, could not be long after this interview with Mr ———; and, when he did arrive, I would, of course, lose no time in making him acquainted with the nature of my new engagements, which would, I conceived, be the more agreeable to him, as the line in which I had now embarked so largely, would give full employment for his types, and his labours, at home, without so much trouble in travelling as he had been accustomed to of late, in collecting, occasionally, so many small sums, as we had now scattered about, all over the country; and, sometimes in such inclement seasons, as to have his progress interrupted by snow, or other storms.

From the circumstance of relieving him from this part of the business, of which, I believe, he was getting tired, with the prospect of keeping his hands pretty full of work otherwise, under the new arrangement in which he was now about to act at Haddington, the information, indeed, could not be otherwise than acceptable; more especially, as, with the certainty of remuneration, from what printing work would be executed at our own office, he would have neither risk, nor responsibility, in this matter; both of which, as well as the originating of the business, so far as he was concerned, lay with myself.

As, from these considerations, it was not likely that I should meet with any objections, or opposition, from that quarter, so neither did I, and as soon as we had the necessary arrangements completed, and things set agoing on their new footing, at Haddington, in the month of May, I lost no time in giving evidence, that, with so many new engagements on my head, I was not more disposed than formerly, to act the part of the sluggard, or to be found loitering by the way side.

According to my usual way of keeping things moving, I see I brought out the 6th number, which completed the first volume of the Monitor, at the promised time, in the month of June, and which, I accompanied, in sending out the parcels, with some folio advertisements; to hang up in the shops of booksellers, or other agents, under the usual head, "This day is Published, and to be had here," &c., in which I introduced, as an inducement to new subscribers to come forward, the following extract from Mrs Grant's Popular Models, which must have just made their appearance; for, I see in a note at the end of one of the volumes, an allusion to something recorded in the April number of the Monitor,—"*Every householder ought to become a subscriber to 'The PHILANTHROPIC MUSEUM.' The plebeian, for the sake of his children; and those in a higher sphere, as a remedy for the pernicious craving for diversion, which entices servants to spend their spare minutes in the streets, or in the haunts of folly, not to say vice.*"



But, indeed, it would appear, that my orders for this publication, by this time, were far from being inconsiderable; and, by a letter I received from one agent a little before, I was informed that, in his town, he had one hundred subscribers, which, he justly remarks, "is no contemptible number."

On the 3d of July, I see I issued my CATALOGUE to the Trade, for that sale which was held on the 13th, in Duff's Tavern, Covenant Close; and, from the size of the room in which the sale was conducted, and its being graced with rather an unusual kind of appendage, hung up on the wall, viz., the identical skull-cap, or head-piece, that I was told had been worn by John Knox, and which, at least, bore marks of being worn in times of danger, being lined with iron I think was, most probably, the very room in which the Covenanters met, in days of yore.

This sale must have been very respectably and numerously attended, as I observe its produce, in bills and smaller sums, amounted to somewhat *more than eight hundred pounds!*—a *no contemptible* sum for a two days work, my friend, who used the expression formerly, and was present on this occasion, might have said; although, as matters turned out afterwards, it would have been much better for me had *one* gentleman been absent. But we cannot *foresee* things, and it is well for us that it is so, or the business of life would soon be at a stand-still, and human industry and exertion, be benumbed by the cheerlessness of the prospect before them, instead of being, as now, often borne forward by the gay and tempting illusions of hope. Well said is it, indeed, by *Pope*, in his little profound treatise, the "Essay on Man,"—

"Heaven, from all creatures, hides the book of fate;  
All but the page prescribed, their present state.  
From brutes, what men, from men, what spirits know,  
Or who could suffer being here below?  
Oh blindness to the future, kindly given,  
That each may fill the circle marked by Heaven."

In the month of July, I observe, I also began to set about my publication business in earnest, by issuing an advertisement, intimating the publication of the first part of a little work, then in course of progress through our own press; and

this was followed up in August, by my circular to agents, &c. and advertisements to the public, respecting a much greater work : one of those, I had taken a concern in, along with Mr ——— : for it does not appear that I had, as yet, issued any general catalogue in regard to this business, although, from what I shall soon have occasion to mention, I certainly did so previously to my going Westward, on the occasion of my Glasgow sale, in the month of September following ; the catalogue, preparatory to which, it appears from a letter I had from a friend, of date the 23d of August, had been issued by that time.

But that letter, puts me in mind of another circumstance, which I would perhaps, otherwise, have forgotten, viz., that I had been *seriously* indisposed ; and that that indisposition was imputed by my ~~very~~ feeling and considerate friend, to the same cause that a former indisposition, already mentioned, and which happened about a dozen of years before, was imputed to, viz., *too much exertion*. But let the following extracts from my friend's letter speak as to this point :—" I am truly sorry that you have been so seriously indisposed. You must, if you regard yourself, relax your exertions. It has often been a wonder to me how you get on." And again, "it is no doubt right, and a duty which we are called to, to do good as we have opportunity," &c. ; but humanely qualifying this last assertion, by observing, that " we must remember that mercy is as, nay *more* acceptable, than sacrifice ;" and afterwards, on the supposition, no doubt, that my *monthly* labours, of late, had been too much for me, goes so far as to call my attention to a *quarterly* publication, remarking, as an inducement, " which will still give you considerable scope to diffuse rational information, and will certainly relieve you," as he goes on to express himself, " of much slavery you have hitherto subjected yourself to."

In this letter, as I observed before, my kind friend makes some allusion to my contemplated sale in GLASGOW, as intimated to take place in a few weeks afterwards ; but before that short period had elapsed, I was doomed, alas ! to receive a blow, which, had it come a little sooner, or before my cata-

logues were issued, and perhaps, that intimation had not been given ;—although, it was one of those secret, or home brought griefs, in which the heart must know its own bitterness, yet, a stranger may not intermeddle with, and like many, many other griefs of the kind that I have since experienced, must therefore be concealed from public gaze, and consequently, from public sympathy.

It must, nevertheless, have done more, infinitely more, than my previous indisposition, (for I was confined to bed at the time I received the mournful intelligence) to unman, unnerve, and unfit me for the new task to which I had just pledged myself ; and in order to carry which into execution, as advertised, on Wednesday, the 6th of September, I went westward, accompanied by my two sons, and a friend who had kindly volunteered his services to assist me, on Monday the 4th, so that, notwithstanding my friend's *friendly* admonitions—my recent severe indisposition—and this new source of depression, that had so unexpectedly assailed me, and which must for some time after, have preyed upon mind, there was *yet NO REST FOR ME*—no time for giving vent to my sorrows in solitude—and it was well that I was so far recovered and reconciled to my lot during this short space, as to be able to go west ; for this sale, which was held on the evening of the 6th and 7th, in Mrs Johnston's tavern, was also pretty well attended, and produced a considerable amount, in addition, although, by no means equal to, what I had formerly experienced from my Edinburgh one.

It was I observe, in consequence of my exertions on the first night of this sale, that my good friend, Mr James Lumsden, proposed, (which proposition was seconded and unanimously carried by all the gentlemen present,) that I should have *THE FREEDOM OF THE TRADE OF THE CITY OF GLASGOW CONFERRED UPON ME*. But it must have been but a small part of these exertions to which my worthy friends then assembled had been witness, for if it may be accounted something of an *oriental* like me, from the extremity of the eastern coast, to have gone so far west to serve and to address these *occidentals*, and to continue in speech from the Wed-

nesday immediately after we had finished our dinner, to, or beyond, the hour of midnight;\* it may be also taken into consideration, that in making my preliminary calls (as they may be styled) to the trade, I had not confined myself to the bounds of the city and suburbs, but had, accompanied by my friends, gone down the Clyde, on the afternoon of the Tuesday preceding the sale, in a steam boat, and made the circuit of waiting upon the gentlemen of the trade in GREENOCK; from thence we proceeded on the same business to those of PORT GLASGOW; and afterwards on that evening, went across the country by the way of Bishop Town, and paid our respects to the brethren at PAISLEY. So that, if there had not been a decent turn out, it must be evident that I had left no stone in these respects, unturned, in order to accomplish it; besides mentioning on the top of my list, that it comprehended "*a number of scarce and valuable works, lately purchased from the stock of the deceased Mr Creech of Edinburgh,*" which was the case, and would, most likely, contribute to augment the number of my purchasers in that city also.

It was, upon the whole, a laborious week, from the Monday morning on which I left Dunbar, until my return on the Saturday evening, and the recollection of which is not unattended by many pleasing reminiscences, that must have contributed a good deal to raise my spirits, as the journey itself, may have contributed to the restoration of my health, as it strikes me, that I came home in both respects better than I went away.

It is not, however, to be inferred, that I allowed myself a week's rest or respite after all this exertion;—for the next Thursday saw me broiling with heat on the top of the coach on my way to Newcastle, under the warmest sun we had experienced for the season; in consequence of which, and the cold frosty night that succeeded, before I had arrived at my journey's end, or had yet passed the many tempting fires that blazed around, as if in mockery of my shudder-

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\* It may be mentioned for the information of those not connected with the book trade, that these WHOLESALE SALES are generally conducted over a glass of wine or toddy, as the taste of the individuals may run, after dinner; hence may be accounted for, the circumstance of such sales being usually held in taverns.

ing condition, I got such a cold, that it required weeks after my return on the Saturday, to get the better.\*

My journey to Newcastle was for a very different purpose than a Sale to the Trade. I had, before going westward to Glasgow, published what I may denominate my *first* canvassing catalogue; as, I think, I embraced the opportunity of being west on that journey, to get acquainted, and form a connexion, with my long trusty agent, P—— C——, whom I may afterwards have occasion to notice; and it was, in pursuit of an agent in the opposite direction, of Newcastle, that I then took the journey, accompanied by a parcel of my general catalogues, in order that I might be the more ready to treat and proceed to business, with a person who resided in that district, and who was particularly recommended to me for the purpose. It was on this journey that a young gentleman, now one of our respectable merchants, and one of my many present respectable subscribers, may possibly recollect having seen me, as I was taking an early saunter, in order to witness some of the scenes of my juvenile days; (as I once resided, in acquiring my business, some time in Newcastle,) previous to proceeding to business, on the morning after I arrived.

By the first of October, I see by my retrospections, I had been enabled to make considerable progress in my new line, for I had, by that time, been sending out supplies to my agents, not only in our own more immediate neighbourhood, in both directions, east and west, but to Stirling, Dunfermline, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Newcastle—nay, I observe, one parcel had gone all the way to Thurso; from which, it appears, I had, by that date, proceeded to put the wheels in motion, in that particular line, upon a pretty extensive scale; and it must have been, under a somewhat promising prospect of success, from the circumstance of my having made some *new contracts* for a further supply of the needful articles.

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\* These tempting, but delusive fires, being at a too great distance to afford the cold passing traveller from the north to Newcastle any warmth, are neither more nor less, than the many heaps of burning coals that on a dark night are observed blazing all around the environs of Newcastle.

So far, then, things seem to have gone on in a prosperous, or rather a flourishing state, both in respect to my **TRADE SALES**, and **GENERAL PUBLICATION BUSINESS** ;—and the experience of my two **DUNBAR WINTER SALES**, which took place in November and December, gave me no reason to complain, but the contrary, in respect to the produce of that method of disposing of part of my now extensive stock ;—while the being able to complete my last periodical, the **Monthly Monitor**, at the time proposed, the middle of December, and to take my farewell of my subscribers in the manner I did, in the preface published in the number for that month, (in which, it will be observed, there is some allusion to, although no positive promise of, a *Quarterly*,) goes to shew, that, up to that time, things continued to move pretty smoothly on ;—if, indeed, the very circumstance of my having issued two additional pages, supplementary to my former publication list—which I see I did of date December, 1815—does not bespeak, in that particular line, at least, rather a healthy and thriving state up to that date ; or, as no day is mentioned, say, up to the time when the sun of 1815 was near its setting.

## CHAPTER XIII.—1815 &amp; 1816.

No pleasure without its alloy.—A little speck above the horizon formerly, now begins to assume a more formidable and terrific appearance.—The year 1815 goes down in a manner very different from what I had anticipated.—An unhappy aggravation to my other calamities.—Two causes that may well be defined as the BEGINNING of these, MY AFTER SORROWS.—One of them, like the one formerly mentioned, must be passed over in silence.—The other described.—An *unexpected*, and *most unseasonable*, demand from an old friend.—A suitable reply and remonstrance.—The mystery developed.—My friend in distress.—Too good reasons for my depression of spirits as the 45th year of my pilgrimage drew towards a close.—And for the unhappy night of transition that occurred betwixt the 13th and 14th January, 1816.—Cheerless and melancholy prospects, with which, my birth-day morning on this eventful year, was ushered in.—Allusion to an old custom, and extract from one of my retrospects.—Suitable reflections on the occasion of entering on the AFTER-NOON OF MY DAYS.—If human exertions could have commanded success, I must have looked forward with confidence to a different result.—Still my situation must have been much worse had I, at the time, been deprived of the consolations of religion.—The satisfaction arising from a consciousness of having done our duty.—In what manner and in what respects, I may be said to have endeavoured to do mine.—Night thoughts.—Little sleep.—Dr Young's "one solid pleasure" defined.—Matters do not seem to improve as I get time to compose and recover myself.—My resolution, in consequence, to face the danger boldly, and instead of shrinking from, to endeavour to overcome it.—How I commenced my operations for this purpose.

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It has been often remarked, that there is no pleasure without its alloy; and on that account, I need not have been surprised at either the calamitous intelligence I received to vex me in the month of August, or another matter that gave me some uneasiness, at a later period, viz. the 8th of November following, although both happened at a time, or within the compass of a year, in which, things seem to have moved with me, upon the whole, in a rather joyful and prosperous manner.

But as I got over the former, from a consideration of the hopelessness of the case, and the sad necessity there was, for submitting to what, on my part, could neither have been prevented or avoided. So the latter gave me no great concern, and what I must have considered only a temporary

uneasiness, from the conviction that it would only put me a little about at the time. So that, by the middle of December, or the time to which I had brought up my narrative at the close of my last chapter; it is not likely I would experience any great anxiety on either of these accounts. On the 21st of the month, (December) I however received a letter, which made that of the 8th of November preceding, although it then appeared as only a small insignificant speck above the horizon, assume a more formidable aspect, and another of the 23d, which gave it a still more terrific shape, and which combined, would no doubt take away all appetite from me, for the approaching Christmas festivities, and make the year go down in a way very different from what I had so recently anticipated. While, before the remaining thirteen days of my forty-fifth year were allowed to pass over my head, I was doomed to experience such a dreadful shock to my feelings, in the afflictive scene I was obliged to witness, and to become in part an actor in, on that fearful Saturday night, the events of which will never be obliterated from memory; and which contributed, at the time, to make me hail the ensuing morning, though that of the anniversary of my birth, with fear and trembling, or, at least, with far other sentiments than those of joy.

Joy, indeed, with me ON THIS BIRTH DAY, was out of the question, and it was the more lamentable to think, that it was not only on the entry of a new year, but a new era, or period of my life;—for my *third* period or NOON-TIDE of existence had now passed away, and on that dreadful night of transition, in which I was “scared with visions and terrified by dreams” of fearful import, I passed the boundary line, which limited, on that side, the AFTERNOON of my life!

As the two concurring causes which preyed so heavily upon me, as to produce such *painful feelings*, and such a *restless and cheerless night* at that time, may be said to have been THE BEGINNING OF THOSE SORROWS, that have conspired or contributed to bow me down to the dust, and to make me walk so mournfully along ever since, it may naturally be expected that I should, in this stage of my progress, give some account or explanation of them.



But the first, like one I observed before, is of that description of *grains*, which a stranger may not intermeddle with, and must therefore remain for the present, a secret with those of my own family, and a worthy neighbour at the time, who, like myself, was unexpectedly called to be both a spectator and a part actor in the dreadful scene.

The other, however, although from motives of delicacy it requires some, demands less secrecy, and is shortly as follows : It may be recollected, that amidst my other causes for exultation, I took occasion to mention formerly, that I had two great friends at Court, ever ready and willing to assist me on every emergency, in which I might stand in need of their assistance, in matters which I considered conducive to my advantage, and the interests of my family. Now the letter of the 8th of November was from one of these gentlemen, conveying, although in the gentlest manner possible, the rather at the time unwelcome intelligence, that it would be necessary for me to repay sundry advances he had made me ; but this, as I observed before, could give me no very material concern, or indeed any concern at all, further than putting me "somewhat about at the time," as I see I have expressed it elsewhere ; for I had already in my possession, wherewith to satisfy *a part* of the demand, which I lost no time in doing, although from funds that I meant to have applied to other purposes ; and, as the note did not seem peculiarly pressing for the *whole*, I had no doubt whatever that my friend would have had patience, until the return of my son from the journies he was about to undertake for me, after the new year, (then so near at hand) when I expected to be put in funds to clear off the whole. By the letter I received on the 21st, I found, however, that the demand was more pressing and more peremptory than I expected ; for I never dreamed that my friend, who had been so ready to serve me in pecuniary matters on so many occasions, in which I would no doubt have been more circumspect and limited in my operations, if I had not had such a source of assistance to depend on, would, I say, have been less accommodating in the manner in which I was to pay back these obligations, when it became necessary for me to do so.

That letter, however, put an end to all my delusions on this head; for, I at once perceived, that, as in the conflicts we must all of us endure with the last enemy, so there was to be neither discharge nor put off by procrastination, *in this war*. I, in consequence, wrote my friend what I considered a very suitable answer and remonstrance to this letter, which, I am happy to observe by the copy of it now before me, was couched, although in firm, yet in polite, respectful, and rather affectionate terms; for on the day following, or two days from the date of his letter of the 21st, I received intelligence from *another friend*, who was well acquainted with the friendly footing upon which I stood with this, his friend, as well as mine, containing a development of the whole mystery, in these affecting, to me, almost heart-breaking words, "poor —— is very far behind."

Alas! that the year should have gone down with my mind clouded by such a piece of mournful intelligence; for I had long known what it was to have a friend in need, in the kind offices of this good friend, as I shall ever call him, and now, he was not only rendered incapable of doing me further service, but under the necessity, from the nature and extent of his own misfortunes, to be *peremptory in his demands upon me*, at the very time I had so much occasion for all my available funds otherwise; in consequence of the new and extensive engagements I had recently come under, little expecting, alas! and alas! what was so soon to happen;—for it must not be lost sight of, that whatever the profits of this new concern in which I most certainly would never have embarked, had I had the gift of foreknowledge, might have been afterwards, it must, like the establishment of an extensive farming, or other concern of the kind, have been necessarily attended with considerable outlay, *in the first place*:—and was that, a period, to be called upon, to repay that out of my immediately available funds, which would, for a time, at least, be so requisite otherwise.

It was not, and it is no wonder, therefore, that this affecting consideration, accompanied by another which would very naturally follow, viz., that my other good friend might be so far crippled in his own disposition to serve me in future, by the

misfortune that had befallen *his* own friend—that comparatively, little ~~and~~ might be expected from that quarter also, in the event of my requiring it,—should be the means of depressing my spirits, as my forty-fifth year drew towards a close ; and, coupled with the affecting scene I was doomed to witness, and be in part engaged in, on the night that formed the eve of its departure, should have had the effect of producing, in the short period that intervened betwixt my waking hours of the 13th and 14th of January, 1816—that important *passing* point of transition, betwixt the *third* and *fourth* definitive periods of my life, according to the scale of the natural division I have formerly mentioned—that *restless* and *feverish* night, *broken* and *disturbed* as it was by *unseemly visions* and *fearful dreams*, which I not only took occasion to notice, in such affecting and feeling terms, in my forthcoming retrospect, at the time, but have good cause to remember with sentiments of sorrow to the present day.\*

Behold me, therefore, opening my eyes on the morning of my birth-day, at that interesting and important period of my life, after a night of any thing but repose—and entering on that stage, when, as I observed before, I should rather have been thinking of indulging myself with my afternoon's nap, after enduring the burden and heat of the day—with so many calls upon me for renewed exertion, and so much occasion for the following reflections, which I copy almost verbatim from my reminiscences of that period :—

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\* “ In my forthcoming retrospect,”—As I shall, in course of these pages, have occasionally to allude, or refer to these retrospects, it may be as well that I embrace the opportunity, in this place to notice, that I had been long in the habit of devoting an hour or two, at some convenient season, after the commencement of the New Year, and frequently, I see by the dates, on my birth-day, to commit to paper, what I used to designate as my “ Annual Retrospect,” and which, I have continued down to the present day. Although there are some things in these Retrospects, or private communings, of too domestic or private a nature to meet the public eye,—yet nothing can shew more correctly the nature of my feelings, and state of my mind at the time, and this is the best apology I can offer for taking occasional extracts from them. The one, I allude to, as above, bearing date the 21st January 1816, and commencing—“ Last Sunday was my Birth-day, but, it was ushered in, not with joy and gladness, but with fearful forebodings, and dismal prospects”—is of a complexion so peculiarly melancholy, that were I never so much inclined to do it, it would be painful for me, even at this distant day, to quote largely from it. And as an account of dreams and visions, are not in general, a very acceptable treat now-a-days, it will be as well, that I pass over it, with the above short extract, altogether.

"Happy is the man, who, by taking the morning of his days timeously by the end, and persevering, with unremitting assiduity, or diligence in business, in his forenoon hours, and enduring the heat and burden of the day, in laudable exertion during the noon-tide of his existence, is enabled, I shall not go so far as to say, to lay up goods for *many* years, but to provide such a competency of the good things of a present life, as shall supersede, after these periods, the necessity for any extraordinary exertion, to enable him to enjoy his afternoon's nap, undisturbed by the cares and turmoils of life, when he feels languid after the noon-day heat;—and to take a little occasional relaxation from the severity of his labours and his severer studies, before they have, as yet, had sufficient time to exhaust and enervate the MORTAL and IMMORTAL parts of his superstructure.

"But happier by far, is he to be accounted, who, in these days of exertion and activity, has not confined his labours altogether, to the provision of the meat that perisheth—who, sensible of the truth of the assertion of the poet, that, as I have elsewhere quoted—

‘The man who consecrates his hours  
By vigorous efforts and an honest aim,  
At once he draws the sting of life and death,’

has, all along, in the expressive language of Scripture, by a patient continuance in well-doing, or, we may say, by a persevering and long continued series of active virtue and honourable, because laudable, pursuits, sought, at once, to lay up something against the evil day upon earth;—and to increase his treasure in that country where the smallest exertion of humanity, even to the extent of a cup of cold water to a disciple, shall not be without its value—shall not lose its reward."

Could human exertion have commanded success—were a life of labour uniformly crowned by an age of ease—could it be said, that, in every instance, "the hand of the diligent maketh rich"—then might I, at this period of my life, have looked forward with some degree of well founded confidence, to a state of ease and comfort, if not, to one of wealth and independence. But the disposal of the lot is of the Lord, whether in a case in which the co-operation of human agency is

concerned or not ; and it pleased the great Disposer of events, and Sovereign of the Universe, that all my exertions, *so FAR*, should not be crowned with the prize of worldly prosperity.

Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but it is God alone that giveth the increase ; and it pleased the great Over-ruler of events, that all my planting, and all my watering, *SHOULD NOT, UP TO THIS DATE*, have been productive of, but, very meagre returns ;—or, rather, that, upon the expiry of my forty-fifth year, I should have been doomed to eat those bitter fruits, which had such a manifest tendency to usher in the first morning of my forty-sixth year, under the deplorable circumstances formerly alluded to.

But, if under the peculiar circumstances I was placed, at that time, the bread I was doomed to eat was so bitter, and I may add, the waters I was called upon to drink, were so unpalatable—pregnant as they both must have been with the gloomy anticipations of *blasted hopes* and *withered joys*, in regard to temporals—what must my sensations have been on such an afflictive occasion, had I been deprived also of the consolations of that religion, which bids us extract comfort even from our calamities ; and the conscious satisfaction arising from the reflection, that, if up to that period, all my efforts had been so unsuccessful, it had been from no want of exertion *on my part*, to ensure, and to secure a contrary result ;—that, for this purpose, I had spent, in the most unremitting assiduity, not only the available part of the *MORNING*, and the *FORENOON* of my days—those two seasons so well fitted for activity and vigorous exertion—nor had relaxed my pursuits even under the *MERIDIAN SUN* and *NOON-TIDE* of my existence—that, for this purpose, I have toiled early and late—have traversed, in all seasons, and in all kinds of weather, districts remote and contiguous—have busied my thoughts, when the senses of many were locked in the arms of sleep\*—have been incessant

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\* As illustrative of this, I will mention an anecdote that occurred, within these few years. Being met one evening, while indulging myself, as was then sometimes the case, with an evening walk, by a gentleman of the clerical profession, but with whom I was not much acquainted, he, in course of a little conversation, expressed his surprise that I could find leisure for so many literary pursuits, as I had from time to time been engaged in, in the midst of such a multiplicity of concerns as I had to attend to otherwise. But I dare say, his

in my endeavours, by night and by day, to make my various professions, and different lines in the same profession, useful to myself, and productive to my family—in short, that I have left no stone unturned, that was within the bounds of possibility for me to overturn, and all aided by the kind helps raised up to me from time to time by a beneficent Providence—to produce a quite opposite and very different termination to my labours.

It is, indeed, as I think I have somewhere remarked before, on such occasions as these, that the consolations of religion come most forcibly, as well as seasonably, to our aid, and, on these occasions also, the conscious satisfaction of having done our duty, that “one solid pleasure in life,” as Dr Young calls it,\* speaks, with the best, and most powerful effect—that peace

“Sweet peace, that doth from conscience flow,  
That choicest cordial ‘midst a sea of woe!”

Still, matters did not appear to be much in the way of improving, when I had got a little time to recover and compose myself, from the agitated state into which these unlooked for and untoward events had for a while thrown me, and I plainly saw that the best thing I could do, was, to face the danger boldly, and endeavour to overcome, and get the better of, what I had too much rectitude of principle to fly from, and *moral courage*, to think of trying, by any mean shifts, to avoid or evade.

I therefore was determined to wait the result of my son’s contemplated journey, in search of the needful, and, meantime, to make up for any deficiency from such a source, if it fell short, and so to make, as the saying is, surety doubly sure,

astonishment would be rather increased than diminished, when, in answer to a question I put to him, but which he left me to answer myself, viz. How many hours do you think I sleep nightly, on an average throughout the year? I informed him, *three hours and a-half!* Such, however, I believe, has been generally the case, since my labours were so much taken up with the *Cheap Magazine*;—and it is owing, I presume, to such a habit, formed so many years ago, that I am able to devote so many of my *Solemn—Silent—Sleepless—hours*, to the business of composition, up to the present day.

\* “There is but one solid pleasure in life, and that is our duty. How miserable then, how unwise, how unpardonable are they, who make that a pain.”—*Dr Young*.

I published a new wholesale catalogue, under the head of "*A most advantageous offer to the Trade, in point of price, and terms of credit, for this month only,*" and, under the title of "*SALE OF REMNANTS, &c.—FEBRUARY, 1816,*" sent it out among my friends in the trade, (which many of them, will no doubt recollect of, from its title,) all over the country.

The result of these, and some other matters of paramount consideration, at this critical period, we will see in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER XIV.—1816.

A former matter referred to, with some allusion to the melancholy train of circumstances that has since occurred.—A Correspondent reminds me of my hint about a Quarterly Publication.—What may be supposed to have contributed towards doing away all farther idea of such a thing from my mind.—And very substantial reasons for not again embarking in periodicals.—Unsuccessful journey in search of the needful.—Little reason to congratulate myself on the success of my *HOME Wholesale Sale* to the Trade.—Bad news from the west, met with bad news from the north.—A little speck, indicating a new species of troubles, in the horizon.—Bad consequences of so many disagreeables.—A friend in need.—Not yet to be beaten off the field.—Allusion to boyish sports of rather a severe and dangerous description.—Battles of the books in the Latin School of Dunbar in ancient times described.—Early indications of a determined and unyielding spirit.—Allusion to the story of the Dragoon.—Anecdote of the London Watermen.—A mind less firm might have been crushed under the evils I have been called to endure.—A new expedition contemplated.—My two sons set out for London.—If they were not successful, it was not for want of the means to operate with, nor exertions on their part, in the use of those means.—The nature and extent of my London Catalogue described.—Many articles in some—much value in other lots.—Full time for exertion.—More bills come back.—A significant hint from an old friend.—Bad accounts from the north and the west.—Lamentable State of the country in the month of May.—More afflictive extracts from the Annual Register for that year.—Sad times for me.—The Blasting Summer of 1816—will be remembered as long as the black Spring of 1771—and by none more than the writer of these pages.

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It will be recollected, that at the time I published the concluding number of my Monthly Monitor in December, which appears, as matters afterwards turned out, to have been just

on the eve of my being overtaken by that fearful storm, which has since continued to vend its pitiless pelting on my devoted head ; for, at that time, its howlings were, as yet, heard only in the distance, and in such indistinct murmurs as to give me no great concern in regard to their future consequences, and, in the hopes that they would, in an equally harmless manner, be made to pass away—I say it will be recollected, that, at this time, I had said something in the preface, in allusion to, although nothing positive, as to my intentions respecting, a *Quarterly publication*, in the idea of which, I perhaps was disposed to pay some deference to the suggestion of that kind friend, whose reasons for my preferring something of the kind to the continuance of a Monthly, I formerly stated ;—and of this circumstance I was reminded, by a letter dated the 6th of February, from one of my respectable agents in the south, in which he thought that, with the subscribers he had got, he could “dispose of twelve copies” of what he was pleased to call “your Quarterly Magazine,” which shows that my intimation had not altogether been overlooked, although, from the perplexing situation in which I was then situated, I seem to have lost sight of all farther correspondence on that subject.

But, if any hankering remained with me for making an experiment of something of that kind, it must have been speedily put an end to, by the bad success and up-hill work my son had met with on his journey, which soon after took place, with a view of getting the accounts of former periodicals wound up ; and which, with the great trouble and expence necessarily incurred, in collecting so many scattered accounts, even in cases where they were well paid, may perhaps be the best answer that can be given to my good friends, the Messrs Chambers, when, in their *Gazetteer of Scotland*, they surmise that such a work as the Cheap Magazine “might surely be tried again, with better hopes of success than the first,” unless some method can be devised to ensure payments with less expence and less risk, if not in advance, the practicability of which I wish them much success in being able to ascertain, in their widely extended experiment with the Journal. It may be sufficient for my purpose at present, to say,

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that I see by my correspondence at that time, that my son had a good deal of trouble with one individual, who was indebted, and in arrears, for these two small articles, the Magazine and the Monitor, to the amount of upwards of £38, the greater part of which I lie out of to this day, and now, in consequence of the death of the party, I suppose, ever shall.

But, if I had reason to deplore my want of success on this journey, in other matters, besides the difficulties my traveller met with in getting these outstanding periodical accounts settled up, I had little reason to congratulate myself on the result of my attempted *sale to the trade* at home ; for, although I see the sale was to continue, on the terms mentioned in the catalogue, for all that month, (*i. e.* the month of February,) it does not appear to have been very productive, even in that lengthened out time—while my correspondence with my son, would not be in any respects enlivened or lightened, by my having occasion to communicate to him, during his absence, and apparently in answer to some very disagreeable intelligence I had received from himself, in regard to affairs in the west, where, it seems, I had come to a pretty severe loss, by the failure of the house of — — —, that I had met with, or had reason to expect, a still more severe disaster in the north, from the circumstance of one of — — —'s bills having come back, which was but too sure a prelude that it would be followed by others. And to render my disappointments the more unbearable, I see that, by the middle of the month of February, I had a very disagreeable task to go through in settling up matters with one of my agents in my *new line*, which I see I have denominated, in my reminiscences, “ a little black speck above the horizon,” which “ now began to indicate a *new* species of troubles arising against me,” and it will be seen, by the event, that I was not mistaken.

The bad consequences of these disagreeables and disappointments, soon began to be apparent ;—it was evident that I had counted much upon the result of my son's journey, with the aid of its auxiliary, my sale to the trade, for paying up the balance still due to my friend, or rather to *his creditors* ; for the matter was now, alas ! unfortunately for me, quite out of his hands. But, when the result of both came to be known, together with the circumstance of other people's bills

coming back upon me, to say nothing of the little indication I had got, that even all might not turn out gold that glittered in the new concern, upon which my hopes now were principally founded, it was the less surprising that the creditors of my friend would become the more clamorous for their money ; and had not my other old friend come forward, and effected an arrangement with them, to give me a little more time, I do not know what would have been the consequence.

But, discomfited and thwarted in my intentions, as I had been, I was not yet to be beaten off the field, and now, as in many cases afterwards, I had an opportunity of shewing, that the little sturdy unflinching school-boy, that could not easily be made to cry out for quarter, in the Battles of the Books, in what was then called the Latin school of Dunbar, was capable of enduring without complaint, and of bearing up under the pressure of a good many of the evils of life without sinking under them, as he came to grow up, and afterwards act his part, on the stage of life, as a man.\* Ah ! little did I then think, that, in after years, I should be called upon a more open and extensive arena, to exhibit what I could bear of the strokes and buffets of fortune.

Yet, were not these but the early indications of the same determined and unyielding spirit, that led me to grapple with a dragoon, in presence of his comrade, when they attempted to intrude themselves by force upon our family, at an unseasonable hour, after we had secured lodgings for them elsewhere, and hold him fast, until I was relieved by his being taken to the guard-house, at a more advanced period of my youthful days

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\* These battles of the books, to which I have just alluded, were much practised in the days of MR DICK, although I do not recollect if they were continued down to those of MR WHITE. It was, also, I believe, called playing at horsemen, and was accomplished as follows : Some little fellows of sufficient hardihood to stand, and firmness of nerve, to deal many a blow, were picked out from the general run of the Scholars, and pitted against each other, armed with a book or volume of a book, as massy as he could wield with effect against his opponent, armed like himself, and each mounted, on the back of a companion of larger growth, who became dignified on that occasion with the appellation of the horse,—hence the name of the game, playing at horsemen ; and a most dangerous sport or pastime it assuredly was, as the soreness of many ahead, and the havoc of many a book, bore witness. Many a severe conflict of this kind I had in my younger days, and on account of the great obstinacy, or unshrinking firmness I displayed on many occasions, I became quite a favourite in the School in these respects, and was viewed as a horseman of the first water.

—and to treat with defiance, a few years afterwards, the threat of the London watermen, when they took measures to carry that threat into execution, by opposing the landing of myself and party that accompanied me, from a boat, in the Thames\*

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\* The story of the Dragoon, which, although at one time it wore a very alarming appearance, I treated so lightly afterwards in these *buoyant* days of hope and of spirits, as to dramatize it for the amusement of my friends, under the name of "*The Polisher, a Farce*," in allusion to a bookbinding instrument that might have been used in the conflict, with deadly effect, (had I not prevented it) by a young man who rushed to my assistance: I must pass over with giving my readers a caution, by which I have profited *myself* ever since, viz never to allow Soldiers, who are billeted on them, to leave their arms or accoutrements in their house, if they intend them to sleep in other lodgings; for our suffering the men to leave theirs in our kitchen, in the expectation when they went out that they would return speedily, and take them to their room, was the cause that led to our unseasonable disturbance, and had matters been otherwise managed, might have led to more mischief.

But, as illustrative of my argument, I will relate the anecdote of the Watermen, as it appears in the MS. of my "*Journey to London in 1794*," just pre-mising, that it happened on an occasion, when, with a party of friends, among whom was MY GOOD OLD UNCLE, whose amiable qualities I shall ever revere, and whose kind attentions I shall never forget. We had been drinking tea with another friend on board of a ship in the river—and were about to effect a landing in order to get quietly home to our respective places of abode. "It was," says my narrative, "in attempting this in the ship's boat, without coming in all due submission to, and employing the Watermen, the lords of the river, that I displayed a piece of temerity, (I may well call it so) in presence of my worthy old uncle, such as I dare say made the old man, while he trembled for my safety, account his namesake a true Scotsman, and a hero, every inch of him."

"Having pushed off from the vessel in the ship's boat, notwithstanding the repeated calls and offers of service, of these gentlemen, to bring us on shore, we found that at our landing place, they had put *their boats* in such a position, that there was to be no landing without going or stepping across their craft, which having observed, I got to the bow of our boat, and taking one of theirs with one hand, I gave it a push to one side, and another with the other hand, I gave a push to the other side, our boat all the time advancing up the opening I had made, until such time as I thought I might pass with safety on shore, which, in spite of their hostile threats, if we *touch'd*, or *laid hold* of their boats, I did, and sprung right in the midst of them!"—I dare say, the barbarians stood no more amazed, when they saw Paul throw off the viper, that had fastened on his arm, unhurt, than my good old uncle did, when he saw me on landing, instead of being knocked down, or pushed back into the water, standing with my face to the river laughing, and the group of Watermen clapping their hands, and laughing around me!"

The fact is, that, in leaping from the boat, just, it is likely, as she had touched the ground, I had given her, what I shall call *back-swing*, which, by the time Mr M——t, (a scientific gentleman who accompanied us,) had got ready to follow, which he almost did immediately, pushed her into such a depth, that Mr M——t in leaping, jumped into the river, which immediately smothered the frowns of the Watermen's brows, and turned them into mirthful shoutings; and I, seeing how matters stood, had recourse to the best method I could have adapted to effect a reconciliation, which was, by joining in the uproar, and laughing as loudly as any of them. As the matter might, however, have ended very differently, I am far from approving of such an unseasonable temerity, and still feel grateful to an indulgent providence, that it ended no worse.—See *Journey to London*, under the head, April 18, 1794.

—and which has since manifested itself, on so many occasions of deep suffering, from the storms and tempests, and frowns of fortune, enabling me to bear up under the pressure of such evils as would have crushed a mind less firm beneath their accumulated weight, and have destroyed, long ere now, a constitution cast in a more delicate mould? But, alas! what shall I say? For, while such a lesson teaches still more to admire the provisions made by a beneficent providence, for furnishing every class of its creatures, with that convenient armour most suitable to its wants, and the part it has to act in the scale of existence—does it not also give parents some ground for apprehension, when they behold some of their little ones giving indications of an unconquerable spirit, in their juvenile pastimes and childish sports, that a time may come when these distinguishing characteristics will be called to develop themselves more fully, and be more severely tried, in their more lasting and arduous conflicts in the great theatre, or more extensive arena of the world.

From a document before me, of date March 2, I see, that my son had either been dispatched on a new journey, or had not returned from his February one, for, a friend corresponding with me at that time, writes that he “hopes my expectations from ——’s journey will be realized, and that the shortcomings,” (alluding no doubt to the small proceeds of my recent wholesale sale,) “will in some degree be made up.”

But if he had not, by that time, returned from his first, and had set out on a second journey, it would appear that another expedition was then in contemplation, and was soon after carried into effect, for I see by one of those lists now before me, that, most likely, without taking down the types, I had made sundry alterations in my February Catalogue, to make it more suitable or better adapted for the London market; to which place, both of my sons, whose services were then, and afterwards so valuable in helping me forward in the business, were dispatched early in the ensuing month of April, although with what success I cannot now pretend to say.

If they were not successful, the catalogue however shews, that it was not for want of the *means*, as I am confident,

from what I had before, and have since experienced, it would not be for want of the *utmost exertion* on their parts.

That catalogue, indeed, would have done no discredit to the Scottish metropolis itself, instead of a small and rather obscure, for a wholesale business, country town. This will be the more easily believed, when I mention, that although it contained only a few more than 300 different articles,—one of these articles comprehended no less than 2000 copies of one book, which had at that time just issued from the East Lothian press;—two of the articles comprehended 1000 copies each;—six of them 200 copies each;—sixteen of them 100, or upwards, each;—and seventeen of them, 50, or upwards;—while, of the two hundred lots, one of them consisted of that number, of an article, that retailed at one guinea; and of the one hundred lots, one of them consisted of as many copies of an article, whose retail price was marked three guineas; one of them of one hundred copies, of an article, retail price 24s.; and another of the same number of articles, that retailed at 25s.; independently of articles in smaller quantities, among which I see 24 retails at 35s. 24s. 31s. 6d. and some of still smaller numbers, retailing so high as upwards of £11, £9, and £6.

I do not mention these particulars from any wish to make an ostentatious display of the extent and nature of my book stock at the time, for much better had it been for me and others, if it had been of less value and more limited; but I wish to convey the idea, that I was quite in earnest in my endeavours in raising supplies,—and that, in sending my two sons to London, they were not unprovided with the means of doing so to a considerable extent,—while the low prices at which the articles were stated, and long credit allowed for all purchases above £10 in the catalogue,—in ordinary times, must have done much to have insured their success.

And it was full time that both such exertions should be made, and that I should have some success in my efforts, for independently of more of our accounts coming due, and other considerations, I see that by a letter dated the 17th of April, (most likely at the time these operations were going on in London,) I had bills to the amount of a very considerable

sum returned to me from the bank here, in consequence, as the letter enclosing them bore, "of the acceptors being insolvent," while I had, but a little before, received a very significant hint from a gentleman who had long been in the habit of being a friend in need, on any pressing demand, to be, in future, "as easy in my demands as possible ;"—and things around me were so far from mending, that by a letter received from one quarter, (the north) dated the 3d of May, I am informed by a correspondent, of the "low state of the canvassing business at that time in his good town," which he seemed to impute, with good reason, to the low prices the manufacturers obtained for their work, justly observing, that as "weavers are, in many places, getting less than half price for their work, the sale of books cannot be expected to be great ;" and by another that I received from an old and trusty correspondent in an island of the Western Highlands, of date, the 10th of the same month, I am given to understand, that matters are no more in a flourishing state there,—in that remote isle of the sea, than they are with us, and in other quarters of the mainland.—"Our tenantry," says my worthy friend, "complaining and not without reason. Talking generally, what cattle they bought last May for four pounds, or guineas, they cannot find a market for at three pounds."

I mention these two instances from my preserved correspondence of that period, as illustrative of that cheerless and unhappy state into which the country was getting in these two directions ; but, by the assistance of an "Annual Register for 1816," now before me, I see that this gloomy state of things was not confined to the north and to the west, but was fearfully manifested in their consequences, both to the south and to the east, as the following extract too amply demonstrates. From Dorsetshire, one of the southern counties of England, bordering on the English Channel, we learn, of date, May 6, that, on that "morning, in consequence of the advance in the price of bread, several groups of the manufacturing poor assembled at different parts of Bridport, complaining of the grievance, added to their want of employ from the present stagnation of trade,"—while the fires in Suf-

folk, and riots in Norfolk, the two most eastern counties, running as they do into the German Ocean, recorded in that volume, as taking place from the 9th to the 22d of that month, as well as what fell out at the end of it in the more inland county of Cambridge,—bear fearful evidence that the evil was far from being local, or confined to one direction or quarter of the island.

The following extract, indeed, dated the 28th, shews us that I need not have gone so far, either south or east, to shew that the situation of my Scottish correspondents, at that gloomy period, were not singular :\*—“ *Newcastle-upon-Tyne.*—We are concerned to state, that serious disturbances have broken out amongst the pitmen and other workmen connected with the collieries upon the Wear. Several hundreds of them are off work, upon the ostensible ground of their present wages being inadequate to their support, while the price of bread continues so very much higher than it has been ;”—and *these*, let it be observed, *were the times* I was obliged to face, and to contend with, in my obligation, under my sad and unexpected reverses, to bring my heavy but well-assorted stock, (had I had time to have operated with it advantageously, and at leisure,) so prematurely to market.

I formerly noticed the circumstance of my having come into the world just before the Black Spring of 1771. I may now record, with equal truth, my more unhappy fate of commencing the publication business, which I denominate a new era of my life, but the year before, or just on the eve of the “blasting summer,” (for such a pursuit) of 1816—a season that will be remembered, as long as the other, for its deplorable effects, and by none more so, than the writer of these pages.

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\* I had not gone too far south for the theatre of my operations after all, as I see, that at that time I was in the way of doing a good deal of business, with Southampton, which is situated in Hampshire, another of the Southern Counties.

## CHAPTER XV.—1816 (CONTINUED.)

The author's wish to descend to the grave in charity with all mankind.—His prospects brighten a little.—A temporary glimpse of sunshine in the month of June.—Despatch my new Agent to the north.—Reasons for doing so.—The most likely field to produce a golden harvest.—This not a new thought.—Had long an eye to, and been in the way of making preparations for it.—A rather strange question.—Nevertheless, very easily solved.—My new Northern Agent arrives at his destination.—Flattering nature of his *first* weekly return.—Method of calculating my profit.—Prudent arrangements with my men.—Future returns from the north, still continue favourable.—One good effect of these flattering prospects.—The calm, alas! of short duration.—The bad consequence of hope deferred.—My friends begin to manifest tokens of impatience.—Golden prospects in the distance, attended with much present outlay, not the balm I want.—Reasons for perseverance.—The conflict becomes too hard for me.—Laid up by indisposition.—Bodily trouble, not the worst kind of indisposition I had to bear up under.—Affecting extract from some of my papers at the time.—Almost induced, in despondency, to give up the contest.—“An awful calamity” befalls a person who was otherwise disposed to serve me, and in consequence, an unwelcome piece of intelligence.—Worse and Worse.—Another unseasonable disappointment.—An appalling discovery.—Lose my last hold of the anchor of hope.—Unhappy alternative to which I am reduced, in the words of an old friend,

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WERE I to attempt to draw the attention of my readers, to the afflicting details of all that befel me during the three ensuing months, it would be only to lacerate their feelings, and harrow up my own, besides placing the conduct of some persons in rather an unfavourable light, than which, nothing is more remote from my intention at the present moment. No! whatever faults or failings these persons had, and however certain measures which I considered rather of a premature or hurried nature, at the time, may have caused, at that time, a momentary irritation, I have had much since to sober and cool down the heat of that irritation; and I trust, that I will now be quietly allowed to descend to the grave, in charity with all mankind, in regard to past events.

In the beginning of June, however, there seems to have been a temporary glimpse of sunshine, after the gloomy appearances of the month of May, and that glimpse, I seem to have embraced, in making preparations for, or rather for the



final despatch of a young man, a native of that district, but with whom I had now got pretty well acquainted, from his being, for some time, employed in some of my home circuits, or in our own neighbourhood, to open up a wider field of operations for himself, with full powers to employ so many additional hands as he should find full occupation and occasion for, in the town of, and country around, Inverness.

And, lest any of my more critical readers be disposed to impute this to a want of prudence, considering the state into which the country had already got in sundry districts, as mentioned in my preceding chapter; and the indications I had already had, although on but a small scale, that all was not gold that glittered, even in this new line; I must premise, that this was the quarter originally recommended to me by Mr —, as the most likely of any, to be productive of a *golden harvest*,—that to this quarter I had all along been directing my attention, and making preparations for, although that attention and those preparations had been too much distracted, or turned aside from it, of late, by other considerations—that my preparations were now in a very complete and efficient state—and, above all, that the ground was represented by this young man himself, as well deserving immediate cultivation, and was yet unoccupied,—and, besides, whatever discouragements I had met with, or was meeting, from other attempts, matters, in this line, even in my more nearly situated vineyards, *were beginning*, or *had begun*, to assume a most encouraging aspect. Without this, it is impossible to account for an expression in a letter from a friend, about that period, “Do you really, in the space of a week, realize upwards of £50?”—but which, paradoxical as it may appear, receives some corroboration, from the consideration, that the howling of the storm, of which we had so many evident proofs, from its devastating effects, at a greater distance, to the west, to the east, to the south, and in one district, at a no very great distance, to the north—had only as yet, been heard from a distance, at, and in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, and along the whole of the midland districts, from Renfrewshire to East Lothian and Berwickshire on the east—in course of which I appear to have had six labourers pretty actively employed

during the month of May, if not sooner, including the young man, to whom I have just alluded, as being removed from it to other ground, before the middle of June.

I say paradoxical, as it may appear to my readers that I had, at last, fallen upon such a mine of wealth, in such times, at least, in my own calculation, founded too upon pretty good data; it receives, however, some countenance from the above considerations, corroborated as any hint of the kind must have afterwards been, from the VERY FIRST return I had from my now *new Northern*, or Inverness-shire district agent, who appears to have got his final despatches, or sailing orders, from me, on the 8th of June, and whatever way he accomplished his journey, whether by land or by water, appears to have reached his ground, and commenced his operations, by Monday the 17th; for his *first return*, which in no respect belies the expectations we had formed, and comprehending, on a printed form, in a very distinct manner, day and date for every thing, beginning on that day, and ending on Saturday the 22d,\* contains the very flattering intelligence, that he had himself sold, or got subscribers for, in course of that week, to the retail amount of £15: 3s., notwithstanding the time he must have lost in making his arrangements, and setting things a-going—that a young man, a friend of his own, and who afterwards succeeded him in the management of the business, had operated to the amount of no less than £57, 3s. 6d. more—while a third, another lad that he had by this time engaged, produced his statement, to the extent of £12, 16s. in addition, making in all £85: 2: 6! Now, if calculating upon the principle of one-third going for materials to work with, another *third* for necessary expenses of doing up the numbers, paying the men their wages, and other incidental expenses, &c. in getting subscriptions, and in the after delivery of the books, till completed—and the remaining *third* as a profit, is there any thing unreasonable in the supposition

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\* I was very particular in making my agents adhere to filling in these *printed forms*, a plentiful supply of which, as well as with the other necessary apparatus of portfolios, and canvassing Catalogues, &c. my men were furnished.—I had also printed terms and regulations for their guidance, which they were requested to sign, so that, if any thing went wrong, it was not for want of the necessary means being adopted to prevent it.

that, if *three men*, one of them evidently much shackled by engagements otherwise, and one of them, as I think it turned out afterwards, no great hand at the business, could realize, (alas ! that it should only have been in anticipation, and on paper,) upwards of £28 in a single week—double that number, or perhaps more than double that number, in another quarter, should produce returns, leaving a profit to the amount of £50. In whatever way I may have been influenced in making the report to my friend, one thing is certain, that, as I could have had no interest in, so I could have no intention of deceiving him, and with whatever incredulity he might be disposed to receive the intelligence at the time, and with whatever sensations of surprise it may be viewed, both by my readers and myself *now*, I have no doubt whatever, that I had stated the fact exactly as I believed it, without the smallest intention, on my part, either to exaggerate or deceive.

Nor did my *future returns*, which arrived regularly at the time appointed weekly, give me the smallest cause to regret, that I had at last, made the attempt, on that ground ; which, if any thing, I had reason to conclude, had rather, from causes which I could not foresee, been already too long neglected ;—for these returns certainly were flattering in the extreme,—and I was far from finding any fault with my agent, as he successively added from time to time, new labourers, to that part of my now extensive vineyard.

There was one effect which these brightening prospects could not fail to have upon me, they must have done much to bear me up, under the effects, which so many recent disappointments and short-comings, in my other endeavours and pursuits, must have had upon me ; for it is much to be feared that the expedition to London, from which my two sons had recently returned, had also fallen short of my expectations.

The calm that I enjoyed under these flattering prospects, was, however, doomed to be of short continuance, for hope deferred, it has been well said, maketh the heart sick, and the protracted nature of my disappointment, of the means, soon began to produce their natural effects, upon those who had the most considerable claims against me, so that arrange-

ment after arrangement succeeded each other with fearful rapidity, and I soon found, that golden prospects in the distance, to be created only by much present outlay,—and enlarged by a great deal of additional expense,—were not exactly the kind of balm I wanted, at that critical and interesting moment.\*

Still, from a conviction that to attempt to recede now from the business in which I had so largely embarked, would be certain destruction to all my hopes from that source, while every addition to the number of my subscribers, I was equally convinced, was putting it more in my power, ultimately to surmount my difficulties, with credit to myself and profit to others. I struggled on with the most unflinching and persevering assiduity, until my severe conflicts betwixt what I considered my own interest and the interest of others, and my ability, brought me into that severe state of bodily indisposition, which I had almost forgotten, but which I am reminded of by the following extract from the letter of a friend, dated the 8th of July, in which he hopes “you are still continuing to mend, and are again able to go about in your usual way.”—But bodily indisposition was not the worst I had at that time to bear, for I see that some proposal made to me in the course of the arrangements above alluded to, but which I must do the gentleman who made it the justice to say, was humanely receded from, in consequence of my affecting representation and remonstrances, had such an effect upon my spirits, as almost to drive me in despondency to give up the contest, as appears evident from the following extract from one of my papers written about this period:—“Were it not that the fate of the family depends so much

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\* To give an idea of the slow returns and great outlay I experienced from this business, during the first quarter, or that ending the 21st of September, it may be sufficient to state, that up to that date, at an expence of £136:14:7½, and sending out goods to the amount of £813:0:8, I had only got one solitary remittance of £10 sterling! But I was taught to believe, and indeed had reason to expect, that, after so much outlay in *sowing the seed*, &c. the golden harvest would one day come; but, it will be seen, alas! that it was long in coming; while there was no remission, but rather from the employment of additional hands, in order to raise the circuit the more expeditiously, an increase in the expenses. So that, no aid was to be expected from that quarter, for some time at least.

on the arduous struggle, and the consciousness that every month I am able to hold on, *adds to the increase of my capital, and consequently diminishes the risk of my friends*, no consideration would induce me to attempt to maintain it longer.—I would shrink from the sacrifices I am obliged to make, and would endeavour to submit with patient resignation to that lot, to which, ere long, I may be obliged to bow.”

Of date, the 8th, the same in which I am reminded by the letter from my friend of my recent indisposition, I had another from one of my principal, if not the chief of my creditors at the time, (and who, from the most perfect conviction, knew that I stood much in need of his occasional assistance, as my now frequent heavy bills came round,) with the unwelcome intelligence that,—I shall quote his own words, “An awful calamity has overtaken us here,” alluding to the circumstance of their bank having given over discounting, “a single bill, nor give a farthing out on any account,” and begging “most earnestly” that I would manage a bill I had coming due in the ensuing month, to a pretty heavy amount, without his assistance; and from the effects of such intelligence, it is not likely I would be any way relieved by means of a call I had from another quarter, on the 11th, by which I was put into such a state of excitement, as to make me say something not so pleasant to the feelings of the gentleman who called, than I would most likely otherwise have done, and which, I trust, he will be the more disposed to commiserate and excuse, when he reads these pages, and learns, perhaps for the first time, that, upon his leaving me, the effects of the conversation had such an effect upon my own strongly agitated feelings, that I was glad to retire to my little garden, in order to hide their fearful workings, and compose myself in solitude.

The climax of my misfortunes seem here, however, to have been nearly at hand, for I see by a letter I wrote to the gentleman who had met with the “awful calamity,” formerly alluded to, that instead of being able, as he wished, to manage the August bill without his aid, I had been disappointed of a sum that I then expected, to a considerable amount, and that, in place of being able to make it up otherwise at the time,

I had another bill on the eve of becoming due, in which I was responsible for goods which I had ordered for a young person, whom I had been, within these few years, the means of establishing in business in a neighbouring town, and in whom, from former experience, I placed the greatest confidence ;—when, lo! how shall I proceed with my narrative?—I made the *appalling discovery* to one in my situation, that that person had nothing to pay ; or, in other words, had become so utterly insolvent, that all I got in return for a sum far beyond what I should have trusted such a one, even with all the good opinion I had formed,—was a mere trifle not worth the mentioning.

The discovery of this loss by ——— seems to have done much to destroy or loosen *the last hold I had of “the anchor of hope,”*\* for although I might have afterwards had, as it appears indeed I had, some transient glimpses of sunshine, they seem to have been all dispelled, or to have given way by the 23d of the month, (August) when, in answer to a letter communicating the dismal intelligence to one of my principal creditors, in order to have his advice, I received the following answer, “I have yours, and am much distressed alike upon your account and my own at the disastrous intelligence it contains. You have no alternative, but to lay a statement of your matters before your creditors.”

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\* The extent of this severe loss, seems to have been as difficult to account for, as it was unexpected, for I recollect making the remark in allusion to it sometime after the extent of the loss was ascertained, that if I had seen a vessel in full sail, upset all on a sudden, (as was the case a short time before off Dunbar,) with as much of my property on board, I would have been sorry for the loss, but I would, in consequence of being satisfied as to how it happened, have said no more about it. But to have been stript of my property to such an extent without any visible way or manner of accounting for it, must have been a most vexatious circumstance, and happening at the time it did, must have gone near my heart.

## CHAPTER XVI.—1816 (CONTINUED.)

An *old* fashioned Book recommended to *new* fashioned readers.—The nature of its contents cannot be too universally known.—Sundry Extracts from this *Old* fashioned book, entitled, “The Complete English Tradesman,” in the text and in the Notes.—My conduct on an unfortunate occasion, contrasted with that of the unfortunate Tradesman of former times.—I adopt the suggestion given me by my friend.—Call a meeting of my Creditors.—Copy of my Circular.—An affecting circumstance brought to my recollection by my reminiscences of that period.—A mournful country walk.—Green fields in the Autumn of 1816, contrasted with the black Spring of 1771.—Alarming accounts from the north wait my return.—Earthquake at Inverness.—The wretched state of my feelings at the time, as evidenced by sundry extracts from a letter to a friend,—In which, are also noticed, certain particulars which might have otherwise, escaped my recollection.—Compliment paid me in consequence of one part of my conduct,—“Another piece of disastrous intelligence,” and comprehending a *double* disappointment.—A temporary glimpse of comfort: Is but temporary, being quickly followed up by another disappointment.—Every respite seems but to aggravate my case.—Dreadful state of perturbation into which I was thrown.—Affecting extract from the letter to my friend.—One consolation still remains.—My representations in that letter could not be coloured at an after period.—I *must* have been at once sensible of, and much affected by, my situation.—An affecting question asked.—I prefer abiding by the vessel in distress, and saving as many of the goods as possible, for the benefit of the owners.—How it is to be accounted for, that I did not send out my Circular sooner.—A false, but praise-worthy shame, coupled with a flattering, but as it turned out, delusive hope, must have had their full share in the business.—An allusion to the manner in which my Circular is worded.

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THERE is still extant an *old* fashioned book, entitled “*The Complete English Tradesman*,”\* which, although it abounds with uncouth terms, to modern ears, and what may be called somewhat obsolete customs in modern manners, I could wish to see, for its general sterling worth, and the doctrines it inculcates, become a *new* fashioned text-book, in our day, all over the world where the English language is spoken, for the benefit of those who are engaged in mercantile and commercial pursuits.

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\* A Duodecimo Volume. Imprint, Dublin, printed for George Ewing, at the Angel and Bible, in Dame Street, M,DCC,XXVI. With a Supplement attached, same imprint, 1727.

In that little volume, the author, whoever he is, takes occasion to remark, at the commencement of his letter entitled "Of the Tradesman in Distress and becoming Bankrupt." "In former times it was a dismal, and calamitous thing for a tradesman *to break*: where it befel (I preserve the original italics and spelling) a family, it put all into confusion and distraction: the man in the utmost terror, fright, and distress, ran away with what goods he could get off, as if the house was on fire, to get into the *Fryars* or the *Mint*; the family fled *one* way, and *one* another, like people in desperation, the wife to her father and mother, *if she had any*, and the children, some to one relation, some to another; a statute (so they vulgarly call a commission of bankrupt) came and swept away all, and often times consumed it too, and left little or nothing either to pay creditors, or relieve the bankrupt. This made the bankrupt desperate, and made him fly to those places of shelter with his goods, where, hardened by the cruelty of the creditors, he chose to spend all the effects which should have paid the creditors, and at last perished in misery."\* Now, although I would not yield to the unfortu-

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\* Not having room in my text for a larger extract from this little invaluable, and to the young tradesman, in particular, highly interesting work, which treats of *fine Shops* and *fine Shews*,—*bad situations for business*—*over-trading*, and *over-trusting*—and other matters, which the very sensible author considers as contributing and concurring to the tradesman's ruin, I shall content myself with appending, in the way of a Note, the following specimen of his style, and the soundness of his reasoning, humbly trusting, that from the impartiality it manifests, and the disposition it evinces, to serve each, it will be acceptable to both the fortunate and the unfortunate (in these respects) description of my readers, although from the circumstance, of my never, to *almost* the very last hour, having considered that, with a little time, I would have paid less than twenty shillings per pound to every person, the passage cannot be said to bear so very particularly on my own case.

It is taken, it will be observed, from that part of the work, in which the Author tenders his advice to the young tradesman, when he finds his affairs getting into irrecoverable disorder. Or, to use the homely phrase made use of, sees himself "going down."

"We have a great clamour among us of the cruelty of creditors; and it is a popular clamour; that goes a great way with some people; but let them tell us whenever creditors were cruel, when the debtor came thus to them with 15 shillings in the pound in his offer; perhaps when the debtor has run to the utmost, and there appears to be little or nothing left, he has been used roughly, and 'tis enough to provoke a creditor indeed, to be offered a shilling or half-a-crown in the pound for a large debt, when, had the debtor been *honest*, and *broke* in time, they might have received perhaps two-thirds of their debt, and the debtor have been in better condition too—"BREAK" then in time, young Tradesman! if you see you are going down, and that the hazard of going on is doubtful; you will certainly be received by your creditors with compassion, and with a generous



nate debtor of *any former time* in regard to the dismal and calamitous light in which I considered a state of insolvency ; Yet, I neither thought of running away, or of carrying off my goods to a place of shelter, but resolved manfully to face out the danger, by adopting the hint given me by my friend, and issuing a circular calling a meeting of my creditors, of which the following is a copy :—

“ DUNBAR, 24th August, 1816.

“ SIR,—I am extremely sorry to state, that in consequence of a combination of unfortunate circumstances, chiefly arising out of the calamitous state of the times, I am under the painful necessity of suspending my payments for the present, and of requesting a meeting of my creditors in the house of Mr Lorimer,\* Dunbar, on Saturday, the 7th September, at 12 o'clock, noon, at which, I earnestly request you will have the goodness to attend, in order to take into consideration the state of my affairs, and the most proper means to be adopted for the general good.

“ In the midst of this unhappy reverse, it gives me some consolation to hope, that as much of my embarrassment has arisen from the long continued pressure of a heavy book stock,

treatment ; and whatever happens, you will be able to begin the world again with the title of an honest man ; even the same creditors will embark with you again, and be more forward to give you credit than before.

“ It is true, most tradesmen that brake, merit the name of knave, or dishonest man, but 'tis not so with all ! The reason of the difference lies chiefly in the manner of their breaking, viz. whether sooner or later. It is possible he may be an honest man who *cannot*, but he can never be honest, that can *and will not* pay his debts. Now he, that being able to pay fifteen shillings in the pound, will struggle on, till he sees he shall not be able to pay half-a-crown in the pound, this man was able to pay, but would not ; and, therefore, as above, cannot be an honest man.”

Our author's brief and business like remark, introduced with an N. B. comment on the text, “ *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall,*” is also much to the purpose, as affording an invaluable *hint* to persons in trade to be considerate, even when they may be considered to be in prosperous circumstances. \* N. B. It is not said, let him that standeth take heed, but him *that thinketh* he standeth : Men in trade *can but think* they stand ; and there are so many incidents in a tradesman's circumstances, that sometimes when he thinks himself most secure of standing, he is in most danger of falling.”

\* This part of the arrangement, was, however, afterwards altered with the advice and consent of my two principal creditors, and the meeting, as will be afterwards seen, was held in my own house.

rendered unsaleable for a length of time† by the peculiarly distressed state of the country, I shall, notwithstanding some recent losses and misfortunes, still be able to exhibit such a statement, as shall give no individual reason to fear, that if the funds are economically and judiciously managed, he will suffer any serious loss on my account; and if it should be made to appear, that time only, is wanting, to bring matters round, in the most advantageous manner to all concerned, I humbly trust, that such a portion of that will be granted, as shall be deemed suitable by competent judges, to enable me to accomplish, to the greatest extent, the object of my most fervent wishes, which is, to pay every person his full demand.

I am, Sir, &c.

(and Signed) GEO. MILLER."

There is one very affecting circumstance, which my reminiscences of these distressing times, bring to my recollection, viz. the sorrowful and melancholy walk I had to the country a few days, or at least, but a very short time before the issuing of my circular; for the gloomy state of my mind, and the agitation I was in, during the progress of that walk, when the *green* fields of the month of August seemed to taunt my dismal prospects, as the *black* Spring had frowned upon the year of my birth, too plainly evince that, although I had not perhaps yet come to any final determination in regard to the issuing of that circular, yet all was fearful turmoil and agitation within me, and I had, at all events, arrived at that period when "I knew not well what to do,"—for I recollect on my return from that walk, (which therefore must have been on the 15th or 16th of the month) a letter being put into my hands, which I found on opening, to be from my northern agent, dated the 14th August, and giving in rather a confused and terrific manner, an account of the earthquake that

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† The very delay in carrying into effect my intentions in regard to the publication business in the *new quarter*, must have been much against me, after the heavy purchases I had made, for, so far was that ground from being yet made productive, it was for the present, like a newly occupied farm, *almost all outlay* affording little more produce than was barely sufficient to cover the necessary expenses of men's wages, &c.

was so alarmingly felt at Inverness, on the night preceding.— Intelligence, that like the *green* fields, when we should have been looking for the maturity of Autumn, was in full accordance with my gloomy prospects, and the dreadfully agitated state of my soul—the impression of which, even without these two striking associations, would not have been easily obliterated from the tablet of my memory.

Before however, sending out, the above circular, I wrote a letter to a friend, in which, the wretched state of my feelings at the time, are so truly depicted, that I cannot forbear making a few extracts from it, especially, as they will serve also to throw some light on certain particulars, which otherwise, might have escaped my recollection:—

“I am extremely sorry to say, that after a long and ineffectual struggle, I have too much reason to fear, that my misfortunes, and the deplorable situation of the country, will at last get the better of me so far as to occasion, at least, a temporary suspension; and this is the more afflictive, as, had I been able to have persevered to the completion of these heavy works, in which I engaged, when there was no appearance whatever, of the sad change that has since taken place, I had every reason to expect to have had a reversion for my family of betwixt two and three thousand pounds. And this was not founded upon what the world may call an idle or foolish speculation, but upon a series of practice, that in ordinary times, could scarcely have failed to have produced happy results.” \* \* \* \* \*

After alluding to my late heavy loss by ———, and some other disagreeables, I go on to state, “Still, however, by the kind indulgence and assistance of friends, I hoped to get on towards the completion of the works alluded to, which would, most assuredly, have turned the tables in my favour, and have rendered me less dependent upon others; and I was borne up by the hopes, that after trying every other method to convert some of my heavy unproductive stock into money, I had, at last, fallen upon a market in the number line, in which I have done, and am to this day doing more than I could have expected, considering the situation

of affairs.”\*..... “As far as it respects myself, I am almost become indifferent to what my fate may be. Exhausted in constitution, as I am, by a long and arduous struggle of upwards of twenty years, to so little purpose, and depressed in spirits by a continued chain of vexatious disappointments, I have little prospect of being longer useful, and were it not for my domestic relationship, I should have, perhaps, been better pleased, that it had been the office of another, to have called a few friends together to my funeral, than that I had the disagreeable task to execute, of calling my creditors together ;—a thing that I once contemplated as worse than death itself, but which, it seems the will of Providence that I now endure.”†

After going on to notice some other matters, and among the rest, the circumstance of my having stopped a hogshead and two tierces of sugar from coming forward, which were expected by that week’s carrier, when I found, all on a sudden, the tide running so strongly against me, and for which the proprietors were afterwards pleased to compliment me, by saying that “not one in twenty would have acted so honourably,”‡ I see that I alluded to another circumstance, viz., the receipt of what I called “another piece of disastrous intelligence”—the coming back of a bill, dishonoured, from a person who had been well recommended to me, in —, at the very time, and at the very moment, when I expected a remittance of cash from that very person, besides !—a circumstance which seems to have entirely upset what fortitude still remained in my breast, and led me, as I expressed myself in the letter to

\* This must be obvious from my former statement, as to how things were progressing, for the present quarter, although unproductive, in regard to the necessities of the month.

† It must be seen from what is stated above, as well as in the extracts, that, however, *light* some people may make of *these matters*, it was not so with me. Indeed, I can never forget the gloom and depression of spirits I suffered under at this unhappy period, upon finding, that I was likely to make a stand still, at a time so replete with interest, to myself, and others, who might be involved in, and suffer by my misfortune.

‡ Had the expression been, not one in *ten thousand* it would have been the same, as applied to me, at the time I wrote the letter stopping the sugar, which it did, *after it was already on the road*,—being entirely impelled by *my own feelings*, without any reference to example, or to what others in my situation might have done.

my friend, "in the anguish of despair," to stop the sugar, which might have been regarded as a prelude to what might be expected to follow.

Indeed, my only regret now is, not that I came to the decisive resolution of stopping the sugar, and acting up to it, when I saw that the ground was likely soon to be no longer tenable, with so many *new* and *unexpected reverses* crowding upon me, from almost every quarter, to which I had been accustomed to look for aid—but that, after the interview I had solicited and obtained with my two highest creditors, on the Saturday following the receipt of the above disastrous intelligence, I should, in consequence of the encouraging language they held forth, have changed my mind, and come to the determination of making a new attempt to get over my difficulties—for, although it was certainly a very flattering verdict, to be told by these gentlemen, after they had duly looked into, and considered the state of my affairs, that "*there was no necessity for my stopping*," if I could possibly be carried through," backed by the assurance that the one was disposed to grant me every indulgence, and that the other was to send me a sum of money, in course of a few days. Yet this apparently friendly turn in the beginning, (and as I really believed it was meant to be,) turned out, in the end, to be only a kind of protracted torture, or a lengthening out of my sufferings to no good purpose; for, when the time limited for its arrival came, it brought no money—for the best reason possible—the gentleman had been disappointed, and could get no money himself, and how then could he send me any?

Much better had it been, as I remarked in the above letter to my friend, "had matters come to a crisis" at that interview, for reasons therein stated; but none could be more evident, than one that I mentioned, viz., "every respite seems but to aggravate my case, and make things worse, and God knows whether I could bear up under the dreadful perturbation I now feel, were it not that, premature as the measure is, and fatal to my prospects, there is still a strong probability, that no individual will suffer materially, if any thing, on my account, if I am permitted to wind up the matter myself."

Such was, the true state of my feelings, at that dreadful moment of dismay, when I committed to paper that letter to my friend. From being written at the moment of suffering, they cannot be considered as having been any way coloured at an after period ; and, on reading over the extracts, I think I may safely put the question—Was it possible for any one of the terrified fugitives of former times, or that noble exile, Oliver Salvary himself, whose affecting narrative has been already alluded to, as forming the subject of one of my Cheap Tracts, to be at once more sensible of his unhappy situation, or more affected by it, than I was ?—who, nevertheless, thought it more prudent and praiseworthy to abide by *the going-down vessel*, and endeavour to do all that I possibly could, with such goods as could be saved from the wreck, for the benefit of the owners, than to leave them to their fate, *on any pretence whatever* ;—and these pages will testify, before I have done, that if more was not ultimately saved, it was not my fault.

Indeed, the great surprise may be, that I had not sooner adopted the resolution of sending out these circulars ; which can be accounted for, only on the supposition, that, in midst of all my hard struggles to keep things moving, *I could not brook the idea*, or *bring my mind to bow* to this unhappy and humiliating alternative, so long as I conceived it possible, with the allowance of *a little more time* to realize from my heavy stock, to every person, *his full twenty shillings per pound*—and that such were my hopes, up to the moment of writing to my creditors, must appear from the manner in which the circular is worded.

## CHAPTER XVII.—1816 (CONTINUED.)

The great pervading and operating principle in me at the time, as illustrated by its effects.—In my persisting so long under difficulties.—In my being eager to welcome every ray of comfort, and to grasp at every prospect of hope, in order that I might be enabled to persevere still.—In the manner in which my circular was worded.—In my conduct on the night before the meeting.—And at the time the meeting took place, in my own house, next day.—Copy of my address, to the gentlemen then assembled.—Suddenly indisposed, and obliged to retire.—Kind reception on my return.—Only one jarring string.—One solitary exception.—The subsequent conduct of this person slightly alluded to.—Analysis of the statement laid before, and the minute of the meeting.—My own wishes overruled by the kindness, and good offices of the gentlemen present.—The terms offered and acceded to by me, although hard enough, as things turned out afterwards, better at the time, or more favourable, than I could have anticipated.—A considerate and humane observation by one of the gentlemen present.—Mr ———'s letter to the absentees.—My own opinion, as expressed soon after the meeting in a letter to a friend.—Flattering testimonials from absent creditors.—Choice drops of a most salutary Balm.—A canker, still remains in the wound.—A kind and judicious hint, from a kind and judicious friend.—Grievous reflection.—My case submitted.

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Yes! It was this principle, viz. of the industrious man, being backward, I shall not say ashamed, to acknowledge himself *beat*, while so many of his more indolent and less energetic brethren were thriving around him, that, I believe, was partly the means of my struggling so long with such sacrifice to my ease and feelings, and in which I had so often occasion, as it were, to hope almost against hope.

It was this principle, I believe, that made me more ready to hearken, than they were to advise, when, at the late interview with my two principal creditors, they did not think it expedient that I should stop at the time.

It was this principle operating in me, in conjunction with the conviction that I still had funds enough to meet the demands of every person in full, if all went well in regard to the disposal of my stock afterwards, that my circular was worded in the manner it was.

It was this principle operating in me, with the aforesaid conviction, that, at the meeting of the few friends, on the evening before the general one, I stood so strenuously out to

be allowed to offer 20s. per pound, with the allowance of what I might consider a *reasonable* time; and really, I believe, I took it very much amiss, that Mr Robert Cadell, (my late friend in the business of enabling me to procure subscriptions for my present work,\*) then, of the firm of Messrs A. Constable and Co., should have argued so much as he did on the propriety of my adopting a contrary course, and, in conjunction with the other gentlemen present, insisting on my limiting my offer, with such time as they were disposed to grant, to sixteen shillings; and, when all would not do to overrule the good offices of these kind friends, who seemed to know the difficulties I had to contend with, better than, with my too sanguine wishes to do the *utmost* for my creditors, I appear to have done myself.

It was from the same principle, co-operating with the idea, that I might still be right in my conjecture, and influencing my conduct, that I could not think of facing my creditors on the ensuing day, the 7th of September, although they had kindly preferred having the meeting in my own house, to the adjoining inn, without prefacing the business with the following introductory, and affecting address, which I have copied from the original, in my own hand writing:—

“Gentlemen,—I called you together to-day, in the full expectation of being able to have exhibited such a statement of my affairs as would have enabled me to proceed, with your indulgence, in the pleasing hope of being able to realize from my inventory, (notwithstanding my recent losses) funds sufficient to pay every person twenty shillings per pound.

“It appears, however, to be the decided opinion of gentlemen, who must be competent judges, and who are well acquainted with the book trade at the present moment, that, however anxious I may be, to accomplish a purpose that I have so much at heart, and which has buoyed me up in the tedious task of taking this minute inventory,† any attempt to do

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\* I have to acknowledge my obligations not only to Mr Cadell, and Messrs Oliver and Boyd in this respect, in Edinburgh, but also to Mr James Lumsden, who took so great an interest, and so active a part, in the business at Glasgow.

† This minute inventory, must have been indeed *minutely taken*, as I see it consisted of not fewer than 94 folioscap folio pages.



this, taking times as they are, would be only involving myself in such a continued state of embarrassment, as may prove fatal to my purpose, by taking a burden upon me, which, eventually, I might be unable to accomplish.

“ In this view of the subject, so different from what my sanguine hopes, and anxious wish, to pay every one his full demand, led me to expect, and which, I assure you, gentlemen, is peculiarly distressing to a mind, feeling as I do, after a twenty-four years’ laborious struggle, that I have, unfortunately, no alternative, but either, to make over the whole of my stock, including my household furniture, to the disposal of my creditors, or to offer, after the candid statement I have made, on my own and my son’s security,\* (without whose assistance I could not *now* undertake the management of the concern,) such a composition as the inventory may be judged capable of producing, by the gentlemen who have had the goodness to look it over, leaving it to them also, to decide *on the time necessary for this purpose*, reserving the full accomplishment of my most ardent wishes to a future period, should Providence, afterwards, put it in my power.

“ With sincere gratitude for the good intentions, and kind indulgence already shewn me, I remain, very respectfully,” &c.  
 “ *Dunbar, Sept. 7, 1832.*”

‘ I do not know whether it was before or after the exhibition, or reading of this address, that, all on a sudden, I found myself so overpowered by a sense of my cheerless and humiliating situation, that I had to retire for a few minutes into another room, to recompose myself, and where I was under the necessity of having something of a restorative nature administered to me, by the faithful, alas ! now partner of my sorrows.

Upon my return to the place of meeting, I however found

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\* This may be thought, at first sight, the worst feature of the case, to allow my son to become bound in a matter, which, it would appear, by Mr ———’s letter of the 9th, was very doubtful in the opinions of gentlemen present, I could get through with—but, it was the young man’s voluntary offer, and was accepted of at the time, more as a *form* than for any other purpose ; as I must mention to the honour of the gentlemen concerned, that no advantage, whatever, was taken of the circumstance afterwards :—for which, I shall ever feel grateful.

so much sympathy, with *one solitary exception*,\* that I soon recovered my wonted spirits, and heard the discussions, and went into the measures proposed, agreeably to the after statement, &c. with alacrity, never dreaming that, that *solitary exception*, while he was so busy in endeavouring to smooth me over by his deceitful wiles, and to overrule the scruples of the meeting, which, happily for me, they entertained against my persisting in my offer of twenty shillings per pound, was perhaps, at that very moment, meditating to take that advantage over my unhappy situation, *which he afterwards did*, and, by so doing, made it the more difficult for me to get forward, even with that modified experiment, which my other more kind-hearted creditors so readily agreed to.

From the statement submitted to my creditors, and of which I have a printed copy, with the minute of the meeting, now before me, it appears, that, besides £1,177: 9s. of debts due me, but, at that date, considered irrecoverable, I produced a state of funds to the amount of £10,566: 7: 3, making, in all £11,743: 16: 3, of funds accounted for; against a contra statement of debts due by me, to the amount of £9,520: 7: 8.—So that, after deducting the *nearly twelve hundred pounds* of bad debts, *including recent losses*, there still remained a balance in my favour of *Upwards of One thousand pounds*:—which, if things had been allowed to have been conducted more gradually, and affairs had not taken such a dreadful turn afterwards, might have perhaps, been realized; after paying, in the first place, every person his full demand.

But, it was fortunate for me, that the gentlemen principally concerned saw matters, and the approaching crisis, in a different light from what I did; and the consequence was,

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\* Yes! for the honour of human nature, I must repeat, that there was but *one solitary exception*—and *that* solitary exception, not long after, furnished me with a document in his own hand writing, and still in my possession, that must have done much to blast his reputation, either in his lifetime, or since his decease, had I been desirous to retaliate; but so far is this from being the case, that I will not even now, mention the *initials* of his name, in pity, or rather, out of motives of delicacy, to his surviving connexions:—knowing well, that if individuals could better themselves in this respect, the good John Howard would never have had such a source of grief in his own son, and another excellent philanthropic individual, whom I could, but will not name, have experienced so much trouble and vexatious anxiety, from relatives more distantly connected.

that, instead of exacting an arrangement that bound me down to the *full amount*, the following resolution was agreed to by the meeting, and signed by the preses—one of the gentlemen humanely and considerately observing, that, if Mr M. could pay more out of the funds, they would leave it to himself,—or, rather, if Mr M. could not make up that, which seemed to be doubted by some, they would leave it to him to do as much as he could.—The resolution was to the following purport :

“ From the heavy stock of goods—the depressed state of the country—and the decided opinion of those creditors connected with the book trade, who were present,—it was the unanimous expression of the meeting, that sixteen shillings in the pound would be an ample composition upon the debts, and more than could be realized by any other person than Mr Miller himself.

“ Mr Miller, accordingly, in concurrence with the views of the meeting, made offer of sixteen shillings per pound, payable (as was suggested by the meeting,) at six, twelve, eighteen, and twenty-four months,\* in equal proportions, with the security of his son, —, along with himself; which offer, the meeting agreed to accept, for the claims due them, and they earnestly urge the absent creditors likewise to accept said offer. The composition bills to be dated the first October next. “

“ The meeting requested of Mr — to forward this settlement, and endeavour to see it carried into effect with as little delay as possible, which he agreed to.”

(Signed) — —, Preses.

In compliance with the concluding part of the minute, Mr — lost no time in carrying his part of the operations into effect; for, on Monday the 9th, (the meeting having been on a Saturday) he issued the following circular to the absentees, and every other means was adopted to expedite the business :—

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\* It should have been, for at least the double number of months betwixt each instalment, *in such times, as I was almost immediately, doomed to encounter*; but this, I must observe, in justice to the gentlemen who fixed these periods of settlement, was unforeseen.

“ —————, 9th September, 1816.

“ At the request of the creditors of George Miller, bookseller and grocer in Dunbar, met in his house last Saturday, I transmit you a copy of their minute.

“ In addition to the abstract of Mr Miller's affairs, contained in this minute, it may not be improper to mention, that, considerably more than one half of the debts were represented, and that those gentlemen connected with the book trade, of which Mr Miller's great stock of goods unfortunately consists, were decidedly of opinion, that, unless the business was continued in his own management, very little would be got from it; and they had very great doubts if the composition offered would be realized from the funds, but Mr Miller himself appeared confident, that, with his son's assistance, he would be able to accomplish what he had promised.

“ Of Mr Miller's industry, sobriety, and honesty, there never had been any doubt; but the depressed state of the times has completely defeated his exertions, and, as one of the largest creditors, I have no hesitation in recommending the proposed method of settlement, as the best, and, in fact, the only one that can be adopted.

“ It will, therefore, be necessary that you take an early opportunity of signifying your opinion of it to me, and when the concurrence of the whole creditors is obtained, the composition bills will be immediately issued. In the event of the settlement being carried into effect, it will be necessary that you authorise some person to sign Mr Miller's discharge, upon receiving these bills, and, to save expense, if you think proper to empower me, I shall do this on your behalf.”

(Signed) —————.

However **HARD** the bargain I had unwittingly made, or concluded, for myself, I certainly had great reason to be pleased with the kind and soothing manner I had been generally treated at the meeting—a manner, indeed, which made me adopt the following way of expressing myself, in a letter I had occasion to describe it in, when writing to an acquaintance, a very short time afterwards:—“ I have the satisfaction to say, that my friends (for Mrs M. says they were more

like a meeting of friends than any thing else,) have done for me far beyond what I had any reason to expect, or intention of asking," &c.

But it was not merely from those who were present at the meeting, that I received such demonstrations of esteem and sympathy. As the deeds of accession, or intimations of acquiescence, came in, as they soon did, from all quarters, it will be seen from the few following specimens, that they also breathed much of the balm of consolation.

Of date, the 10th, Messrs — of —, a house I had long done business with, write to Mr —, "We agree to the proposed mode of settlement, as the very best that can be done, and we have confidence Mr Miller will implement it honourably."

Of the 17th, Mr — for Mr —, says, "From the knowledge Mr — has of the integrity and activity of Mr Miller, he considers it the best and most advisable method that could be adopted."

Of the 11th, Mr — of —, writes, "My account is not worth mentioning, but had it been ten times the amount, I should most cheerfully agreed to the terms proposed."

Of the 20th, in a letter from Messrs —, intimating the progressive state of the acquiescences in their quarter to myself, they observe, "We are glad to find you are getting up your spirits, &c." and "We need scarcely add, that your orders shall, if possible, have more than former attention."

A gentleman, one of the firm of a house to whom I stood indebted to a very considerable amount, at that unhappy period, of date the 21st, writes—"We are truly happy your friends seem so unanimous; but, indeed, this is just what we expected, from your NAME standing so high in the commercial world."

Of the 19th October, Messrs — also write to myself,—"We feel entirely satisfied with your arrangement, under the peculiar circumstances of your misfortunes; and so far

from your credit suffering, in our estimation, we shall have no hesitation in executing any future orders in our line, which you may please to send us," &c.

While, in a letter from another gentleman, in answer to one I had occasion to write him on other business, he embraces the opportunity of remarking—"I was in ——— a few days ago, and learnt, for the first time, your misfortune. I could not but sigh at the uncertainty of worldly affairs, and felt much for both Mrs Miller and yourself, knowing it so contrary to your wishes and your deservings. I could not write to you, but concluded, you would put me down amongst those who would agree to any proposal you would make."\*

These were *all* like so many choice drops of the outpourings of the Balm of Gilead; but, alas! it is much to be feared, they were *all* ineffectual at the time, in removing entirely the canker which had eaten into my soul, and occasioned a friend to write me but a few days after the meeting, to the following purport—(I see his letter is dated the 10th of September):—"I am much pleased with the result of Saturday's meeting, and am sorry to think that you should feel unhappy because you could not do what was considered impossible. If things come right again, and it shall please God to prosper your circumstances, you will still have a fine opportunity of evincing the operation of a right principle, by making up the deficiencies," &c. Alas! that matters so turned out afterwards, that I could not even make up my modified engagements!—But, let any person, who reads what follows, say, if it was for *WANT of exertion*—or, for *WANT of the will*, ON MY PART.

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\* It would appear that either the letter had not gone forward, or that this gentleman, had been neglected to be written to, at the time.

## CHAPTER XVIII.—1816 (CONTINUED.)

A noble principle may be too much indulged.—My best apology.—The preservation of a character beyond the power of suspicion.—It is impossible that a man can be *too* honest.—But not so that one may attempt to do *too* much.—Unprecedented state of the country.—A supposed inference attempted to be satisfactorily answered.—Illusory experiments, no reflections on that account.—The die is cast.—No alternative but to proceed.—Good effects of kind treatment.—Take **TIME** by the forelock.—Auctions commence at Haddington.—A new labourer put into the vine-yard in that line.—Congratulate myself for persevering in midst of my difficulties.—Great exertions become necessary on certain occasions.—Route of our new auctioneer.—My own exertions in the field.—An untoward accident toward the close of my Dunbar Sales.—Nature of the accident, and how it was occasioned.—Perplexing situation in which I was placed.—How I was enabled to get the better of it, and to go forward.—Off to Glasgow with my leg bandaged.—Meet my new auctioneering agent, and give him the necessary instructions.—See him at work, previously to leaving him in the performance of the duties of his new office.—Similar causes produce similar effects.—Bad sales in consequence of bad times.—The same doleful note almost universal.—Little progress made in the disposal of my heavy stock, by the end of the year.—Great expense attending these sales at a distance.—Other considerations that seem to have increased the gloom at the end of the year.—Friend Peter's sincere and candid advice.—Reasons why, I should not, and did not, adopt it.—Two things that must have contributed to divert my mind, and bear me up in that season of severe depression.—Much to attend to otherwise.—Encouraging orders, and flattering prospects from the north.—State of affairs at the end of 1816.

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It was no doubt a noble principle by which I was actuated, in offering so much, and in persisting on doing so, against the better judgment of my friends assembled on the evening before the general meeting; but it will be seen, in the sequel, that it had been much better for me, and nothing in prejudice to my creditors, had I been more guided by such considerations as were contained in the very sensible reasoning in my friend's letter, leaving the display of the operation of "a right principle" till afterwards, should things come right again, and Providence put it in my power;—but, the fact is, my integrity in dealing had hitherto been considered rather exemplary than otherwise, or, as it was expressed in one of my late extracts, "your name standing so high in the commercial

world," and as it was yet without any just cause of reproach so I thought, that, like Cæsar's wife, it should still be without suspicion, and hence I was so anxious to make up the 20s. per pound, or the proportion that came nearest to it, if that were not possible. The result, however, too clearly evidenced, that the attempting to act upon such a principle, and from the most praiseworthy motives, without making the proper allowance for contingencies, may lead to the most melancholy and disastrous results; and that, although it is impossible, as I think I told a certain gentleman, for any one in my then situation to be "too HONEST,"\* yet it was possible for him, to attempt to do too MUCH.

The *unprecedented* state to which the country was now hastening, I could indeed have had no idea of, for the very reason which obtained for it the appellation of *unprecedented*, and of which, my readers will hear enough in the next chapter, to show, that it admitted of no parallel;—but, I might easily have inferred, some one may remark, that, in bringing so many books to market, by way of auction, as I must necessarily do, to convert them into cash in a given time, the loss must be very considerable;—but here, alas! if I had had more experience than in the other case, the publication line, to judge by, that experience was of *an illusory nature*, and served only to mislead me. I took occasion formerly to notice the good, or rather flattering success, that had attended my two sales by auction, in the preceding winter, but taking, as I did, the results of these sales to guide me in my calculations in regard to my future expectations, I committed a most egregious error, in consequence of the altered state of the times I had to contend with; as this, however, could not possibly have been foreseen, to the full extent, I must neither make nor allow any reflections on that account.

The die was now cast—my doom was fixed—on *erroneous calculations*, no doubt, but deserving still the name of *RIGHT PRINCIPLES*,—and no alternative remained, but for me to submit to it, and proceed with my task in the best manner, and to the best advantage for all concerned, that I could.

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\* A gentleman, from a house in —, who, in allusion to my recent settlement, told me, that, *I had been too honest.*



From the kind, obliging, and, I may say, soothing conduct of my creditors, I must have been the more disposed to lose no time in doing this—to embrace every opportunity—and to strain every nerve,—to have their hopes and expectations realized, to the utmost of my power—and, by the 26th of the month, I see, from a line I had from my son at Haddington, that he had been, at my desire, in correspondence with that, then well known character in the auctioneering line, P——C——, of *Virgilii Opera* memory, in College Street, to come out to that place, to make a beginning of our sales ;—and on Tuesday the 1st of October, the very day from which my bills were dated, and as soon as we could prudently do it, on account of the *late harvest*, we commenced these sales in earnest ; which shews, that we, at least, had taken *time* by the forelock : and which, indeed, was extremely proper, considering the great quantity of stock we had to go through, in a limited time, and the extent of the business we had in that time to perform—upon looking back on which, indeed, I cannot help congratulating myself on my unflinching conduct, and steady perseverance in a contest, against so many unforeseen obstacles, and new springing up difficulties,—before which, some minds, of a less firm texture, must have shrunk ;—or, it may be, sunk under the protracted and most discouraging conflict.

Indeed, so necessary did it become to keep up our proceeds from this source, on any thing like a respectable footing, and an adequacy to supply our more immediately pressing wants, that, I see, at one time, I was under the necessity of having on less than *four* sets of operators in that way, in the field at once!

Our Haddington sales, for one week, under the occasional superintendence of myself, I had the satisfaction to see turn out well, or to the full extent of our expectations. These were succeeded, in the week following, but with less success, by a new auctioneer, who had just cast up in time, to be pretty constantly employed in that line, for some time, and whose future route lay, through various parts of *East Lothian* and *Berwickshire*, with varied success, some of it of a no very encouraging nature, till the end of the year.

Meantime, under the protection of Mr R.'s license, or ra-

ther with him employed as my auctioneer, while I took the laborious part on my own shoulders, I commenced operations in *the Town-hall, Dunbar*, on the two weeks commencing on the 12th, and ending on the 26th of the month (October,)—and again, on the two weeks ending on the 7th and 14th of December—Mr R., in the interim, having sales at *Linton* on the week ending on the 2d of November.

The sales at *Dunbar*, as noticed above, terminated for the season on the evening of Saturday the 14th of December; and, to shew my anxiety to keep things forward, and full determination that no efforts of *my own* should be wanted, to enable me to do so,—the evening of Monday the 16th (notwithstanding a very untoward accident, for such a journey, which completely disabled and laid me up in bed mostly all the Sunday and made me travel with my leg bound up next day,) found me on the streets of *Glasgow*, where I had gone to employ a new hand, in that particular line, and to give him instructions, previously to his commencing, next evening, in that city.

The untoward accident above alluded to was occasioned as follows:—In fitting up the Town-hall at Dunbar, for our sales, we had placed two long forms, in front of the rostrum, that the ladies, by whom our sales that winter were pretty numerously attended, might occasionally sit down and rest themselves. In assorting the books, on the Saturday afternoon, to be in readiness for the approaching sale in the evening, I had occasion to step, in order to come at some particular book, from one form to the other; but, in going too near the end of the one, it came down with me, and in springing quickly from my awkward situation to the other, it did the same, so that, betwixt the two, I got a stroke on the leg, which ruffled the shin a little, but as I considered it of no material consequence, I perhaps neglected it at the time too much, which, together with my standing so long as, it may be, from six till eleven, during the labours of the night, must have done it no good.

Be this as it may, I felt my leg getting very sore, and much inflamed, during the night, and next day, in order to give it ease, had to confine myself, as already mentioned, to bed, with little prospect of amendment, when the evening came.

But, what was I to do on the Monday?—How fulfil the engagement I had come under, to meet my new auctioneer, upon the arrival of the Glasgow coach, on the streets of that city, on that evening, for the purpose already mentioned; previous to his proceeding on the following day, in a wareroom we had taken for a month, I think, in a most excellent situation, near the entry to Bell's Wynd, High street, at a very low rent indeed, for such a situation :—a too true prognostic of the depressed state trade was getting into, in these trying times, in this once flourishing emporium of our western manufactures?

The wareroom, I say, was taken—the books had been sent forward—the auctioneer had had his assignation to meet me—but the question still recurred, how was I,—the winder-up of the machinery,—the prime mover of the affair,—to get to the place of destination? I had a poultice applied to my leg on the Sunday evening, and such were the happy effects it produced, that, when the morning coach started from my own door, I was able to take my place in it, and off I went, poultice and all, to the great western city, as if nothing had happened,—where I arrived in the evening, and found my agent in waiting, at the time and place appointed. He soon, however, understood, from his inquiries as to the cause of my bandaged leg, that he had very nearly missed his mark for once.

On that evening, after adjourning to my quarters, I gave him the necessary instructions in the science of auctioning, of which, I had had, in my time, a good deal of experience, and on the following night, saw him fairly at work in our new auction room, as above described.

In this situation, however, I soon found—indeed, I must have perceived it before I left Glasgow—that similar causes will produce similar effects,—and that the same operating cause which had tended to depreciate the value of the property of the landlord, and indeed to render his property tenantless, at the time we secured it for the above limited period, viz., *the hardness of the times*, which had now reached Glasgow, and the consequent want of employment of the manufacturing classes, with whom, it was well known, that manufacturing city so much abounded,—had also the effect of making that

property of very little value to the new tenant; for, during the few weeks my agent retained possession of, and continued to operate in, these premises, the produce of the sales came very far short indeed of what we might otherwise have expected, from such a situation, in a city formerly so much famed for the flourishing state of its manufactures and commerce. Alas! how changed, since I had my late WHOLESALE SALE there, and that, but little more than a twelvemonth before!

But, indeed, the same doleful note had begun to be sounded, from one extremity of the theatre of my operations to the other, so that, in bringing up my statements to the end of the year, including those of my other auctioneer, who, by that time, had arrived in course of his rounds, at *Kelso*, from whence his return is dated up to the 31st;—I say, in bringing up my statements in regard to the auction business, to the end of the year, I found, to my sorrow, that I had made little progress indeed, towards converting so much dead, or otherwise unavailable stock, into cash; and that, except at *Haddington* and *Dunbar*, where our sales were conducted with less expense, that method of disposal had been attended by expenses, in proportion to the product, far beyond what I could have previously had any conception of;—and, what must have contributed more to make the year 1816 go down in gloom, or set in clouds, was the consideration, that neither my *home* nor *western circuits*, in the publication line, had done much for me of late—while my hopes from the quarter upon which they had been so long fixed, were still in abeyance; for my remittances, up to that date, I observe, had not come up to any considerable amount.

Indeed, so much had the expectations of my former publication agent at *Glasgow*—and who was the same that, after these discouraging prospects, I had taken the pains to instruct and set a-going in the auction line—fallen off in regard to the other concern, by the 21st of September, that he had taken it upon him, of that date, to offer me the following, what I consider to have been at the time, *his sincere* and *candid* advice:—"I think Mr Miller (seeing this country is in a ruinous state, and no appearance of it getting better,)

you had better wind up all your concerns together, and we will go off to America, and try if the books sell any better there!" and he even goes on to encourage me to such a step, by the communication of some recent information he had received from that quarter, from a correspondent, "on whose word," he says, "I could rely."—But, alas! friend Peter, I had too many ties to bind me to, and too many acts of justice to perform on, this side of the Atlantic; and I was then as busy in winding up my concerns as I could well be, and in the best manner I could.

Two things, I think, must have done a good deal, at that time, towards keeping my mind from sinking, if not to elate my spirits, during that season of severe depression. In the *first* place, my mind was so completely taken up, by having so many things to distract and divert my attention, that I had *little time* to brood over matters, further than what was necessary to keep them moving to the best advantage possible, in the hopes of a better result; and, *secondly*, the exhilarating prospects still held out from my LAND OF PROMISE, in the north, from whence the most encouraging *orders* continued to be poured in weekly, and where, notwithstanding the smallness of the amount of remittances received, up to that date, I see I had, by the end of December, £2,471 *worth of books subscribed for*,—which, calculating at the rate of one *third*, or even one *fourth* profit, must give a tolerable idea of what my expectations must have been from *that quarter*, at the time.

Notwithstanding my shortcomings from auctions—some other disagreeables that I met with—and other up-hill work I had to perform, in course of my other circuits,—it is, therefore, the less to be wondered at, that I should still, in some degree, possess my soul in patience, and be able to display sufficient energy in my operations, in the face of so many discouragements, on this side the great world of waters, in preference to taking my good friend's advice, (for I still believe that the advice was given with a friendly intention,) especially as I was so well supported, and continued to meet with so much flattering encouragement, in my other department, the retail part of my business, which, I must say, in gratitude to those

kind friends, who, at the time, continued to patronize me, instead of falling off, or suffering any diminution, seemed rather to have increased with my difficulties ;—and such was the state of affairs, with me, at the close of 1816—A YEAR THAT I CAN NEVER FORGET.

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## CHAPTER XIX.—1817.

*Terrible TIMES* how brought to remembrance.—*Notched trees* in the wilderness described.—An ancient practice.—One still more ancient.—NEW YEAR'S DAY WALK *by the sea side*, its nature and purposes described.—Reason why, it did not extend far this season.—Church hill levelling.—Charity on the stretch, to devise the means of employment for the industrious classes.—Public works at the time going on at Edinburgh.—General subscriptions for similar purposes, "in almost every town in Scotland".—Dreadful aspect of affairs in the South.—No money *then* to spare, by my formerly most numerous class of customers, for the purpose of buying books.—Significant expression of a friend.—The bad complexion the times were assuming, no *small* concern to me.—My conduct on the occasion.—Sayings of ancient sages, and of an Apostle, quoted.—New routes pointed out to my former auctioneers.—A new one put in commission.—An *African prince* supposed to have been among the number of my customers.—Pity that there had not been more such scattered over the districts, in which, my auctioneers were operating.—Low run of our prices in general.—Combination of circumstances, that contributed, to alarm me.—Resolution in consequence.—Meets with the approval, and recommendation of the person principally concerned.—The complete success of the measure.—Am indisposed.—Little sympathy from the *former solitary exception*.—Another comfort, in addition to the arrangement I had so happily got effected.—First hint in regard to extending my publication business, farther to the northward.—Come to no immediate decision upon the subject.—Set out on my journey to the north.

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THESE were TERRIBLE TIMES to be obliged to keep the wheels of the auctioning machinery perpetually in motion in,—and that, they were indeed *unprecedented* in the annals of the country, as well as in no seeming progress of improvement, when the NEW YEAR began to dawn upon us, I am forcibly reminded, by one of those *notched trees* in the wilderness of life, which, although insignificant, and scarcely worth noticing of themselves, are rendered more worthy of attention and observa-

tion, in consequence of the associations with which they are connected.\*

I noticed, on a former occasion, that it had long been my practice to devote an hour or two, after the commencement of a new year, to what I used to call my Annual Retrospect. But I had been in the habit, for a period longer still, (for I may trace it back to the days of my apprenticeship) to indulge myself with a kind of holiday ramble, in the shape of a solitary walk, along the sea shore, to the eastward of Dunbar, on *new year's day*; and, indeed, of all the days of the year, this was the only one I could claim for the purpose, as being on that day least entangled and engaged in the vortex of business; for it was generally a play day among my working people of all descriptions—independently of its suitableness for the purpose to which I usually applied it; for this walk, this annual walk, as I may then have denominated it, was not undertaken with gun in hand, like some of my contemporaries, for the purpose of shooting sea fowl, with which our coasts abounded at that season of the year, or, for the more exhilarating purpose of wending my way, and throwing myself into the domicile of some of my acquaintances in that direction, in order to partake of their new-year's hospitality:—No, but for the purpose of indulging myself in solitary and undisturbed meditation, on not only the beautiful natural scenery that surrounded me in my progress, but on those busy scenes, and incidents, with their several consequences, that I had recently been a partaker in, or had witnessed, in course of the by-past year; as well as on those which were yet in prospect, or in anticipation, with what might be their probable results.—So that my SEA SIDE WALK ON NEW-YEAR'S DAY, had something in it, not only referring to present objects and occurrences, but of a retrospective, as well as of an anticipatory and prospective nature.

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\* *Notched trees*, I see, I have been accustomed to designate, any little memorandum, or letter, in writing; or reminiscence, or recollection in the storehouse of my memory, by which, notwithstanding the apparent insignificance, or unimportance of the thing itself, taken separately, my attention has been drawn to some striking circumstance, or remarkable occurrence, which happening at the same time, or place, has become in my recollection, associated with it.

Well, on *this NEW-YEAR'S DAY*, it is time that I should mention, that, in consequence of my sore leg, which yet continued in a bandaged state, by reason of the injury it had sustained, in being exposed to a severe frost, during my expedition to Glasgow, I was not able to extend my walk much beyond the Kirkhill toll-bar, at the end of the town; but, in that short excursion, I saw enough, in the kind of operations where the labourers had been proceeding on the day before, or were indeed then at work, in the business of levelling the Church hill, &c., to remind me of *the times I then lived in*—or, rather of the increasing gloom of the prospect before me, in the task I had undertaken, at such an unpropitious period, when, as I had occasion to mention soon afterwards, in submitting certain reasons for having my time lengthened out, to my friends, “Charity is upon the stretch in every direction, in order to devise the means of subsistence for those very classes, upon whom I principally depended as purchasers, at my country sales;”<sup>\*</sup> and when, my advertisements for those sales, were soon to be met with, as it unfortunately turned out, contra advertisements, reminding the industrious classes, that, instead of having money any longer to spare for the purchase of books, they had,—dreadful thought! become themselves the objects of charity, and were called to engage in such public or private works, as could be devised, to eke out their scanty means of existence.

These were, indeed, “*TIMES*,” as a friend writing to me took occasion to observe, “to try men’s souls.” But, it would appear, that so far as I was concerned, and my concern, it

<sup>\*</sup> This net only applies to what was then in progress, in the way of levelling, the protuberances of our own kirk-hill, a thing certainly *unprecedented* on such an occasion, in this neighbourhood,—and to the *works of charity* going on, at Burntisfield Links—in the North Loch—and on the Calton Hill in Edinburgh,—but to, the “general subscription, in behalf of workmen, suffering from the general depression of trade and commerce,” which had followed, the adoption of such measures in Edinburgh, “*in*,” as we are told in the January number of the Scots Magazine, for 1817, “*almost every town in Scotland*.”

Indeed, matters do not seem to have been much better in the south, for I see by the provincial intelligence, in the January number, of the Monthly Magazine, that *public and other meetings* had been held in different places, *all over England*, to consider the condition of the industrious classes, and the manner, or best means of employing them, than which, *nothing can give a more true, and at the same time more affecting, and, to me, peculiarly distressing picture of the times.*



must be admitted, from the recent engagements I had come under, was not small, I did not allow myself to sink under the consideration; for, whether I was in any manner actuated by the doctrine of Epicurism, that "The greater the difficulty, the more glory in surmounting it," and that "Skillful pilots gain their reputation from storms and tempests;"—by that of Plutarch, wherein he says, "Where there is no conflict, there can be no conquest; where there is no conquest, there is no crown;"—by the saying of Seneca, that "Afflictions are but the exercise of virtue," and "Calamity is the occasion of virtue, and a spur to a great mind;"—or borne up by the admonition of the apostle, "Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not,"—one thing is certain, that, instead of thinking of quitting the helm in despair, it will be found that I rather increased my exertions to keep the vessel's head to the sea, and if the produce of my former labourers was beginning to wax rather scanty for my now approaching demand, I lost no time in giving a fresh stimulus to their industry, and in adding to their number.

Hence, it will be seen, that I not only commissioned my west-country agent, so soon as he had fulfilled the time for which we had taken our *dear* CHEAP WAREHOUSE in *Glasgow*, (which I see took place by the 18th January,) to take in *new ground*, and continue operating in the auctioneering way, as he could be occasionally spared from the canvassing deliveries, which I observe he did, by his sales in *Paisley*, from the 11th to the 26th of the month of February, and in other places of the west, up to the 21st of June;\*—and set another a-going in the person of our old acquaintance, the Edinburgh Peter, in *that city*, on the 13th of January, where he acted on my account till the 25th—then, had a series of sales in *Dalkeith*, in February and March, and in Edinburgh again

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\* These New Sales, or rather continuation of that series, I see took place,—at the *Bridge of Johnston*, to a very trifling amount on the 1st March,—at *Killeyth*, on the 7th and 8th,—*St Ninians*, 10th to the 15th,—*Falkirk*, 17th to 22d,—*Denny*, 27th to 31st,—*Stirling*, April 21st and 22d,—*Alloa*, 28th to May 1st,—*Dunblane*, 2d and 3d,—*Kirkintulloch*, 21st,—*Port-Glasgow*, June 11th,—*Greenock*, the 16th,—and concluding at Renton:—the occasional intervals, being occupied by his publication, or, as we may now call it, *delivering* concern.

in the month of May ;—but kept my other auctioneer, J. T. : who, it will be recollected, had arrived at *Kelso*, in course of his peregrinations in the south, by the end of the year, in full and constant employment in the shires of ROXBURGH, SELKIRK, and BERWICK, with an occasional inroad into EAST Lothian and PEEBLESIRE, up to the end of May.\*

It was at one of these sales, viz., that which took place at Hawick, at the end of February and beginning of March, or, it may be, when he returned again to that place in the month of May, or when I had another auctioneer in that district in the month of January of the following year, that I presume THOMAS JENKINS, the son of an African king, according to his very interesting history, as recently given by the Messrs Chambers, in their Journal, had an opportunity of possessing himself of that *inestimable treasure* to him at the time, and which, it would appear, he had some difficulty to come at, the "*Greek Lexicon*," even at the low price we were then selling them—for I see, that more than one copy of that book had been forwarded, at different times, among the assortments sent to that quarter, while it is not likely, more than one would have been sent, had there been no demand for the book ; and the probability is more in favour of my supposition, as there were, I have reason to believe, no other book sales of the kind going on in that part of the country, at the particular period, which seems to fall in with, the time alluded to in that interesting history.

So that, if any good afterwards accrued, either to Mr Thomas Jenkins himself, or, through *his means*, to his future

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\* Viz.—Sale continued at *Kelso* from the 30th December when he commenced, to the 11th of January,—at *Yetholm* on the 13 and 14,—*Morbattle*, 15 and 16,—*Stitchill*, 17 and 18,—*West Gordon*, 20 and 21,—*Westruther*, 22 and 23,—*Longformacus*, 24 and 25,—*Pencoatland*, 27 and 28,—*Ormiston*, 29 and 30,—*Haddington*, 31 and February 1st,—*Pathhead*, 3 and 4,—*Lauder*, 6 to 8,—*Galashiels*, 10 to 13,—*Melrose* 14 and 15,—*Selkirk*, 17 to 22,—*Hawick* 24, 25,—*Denham*, 26,—*Hawick* again, 27 to 8 of March,—*Jedburgh*, 10 to 15,—*Hobkirk*, 18, 19,—*New Castleton*, 20 to 23,—*Chesters*, 25 to 27,—*Ornam*, 28,—*Hownam*, 29 and 30,—*Eccles*, 31 and 1st April,—*St Boswells*, 2, 3,—*Bowden*, 4, 5,—*Earlston*, 7, 8,—*Melrose* again, 9, 10,—*Peebles*, 12 to 15,—*Inverleithen*, 16, 17,—*Peebles* again, 19,—*Biggar*, 21 to 24,—*Pencoatland*, again, May 6, 7,—*Stow*, 8,—*Gattonside*, 9,—*Ancrum*, 10, 12,—*Denham* again, 13, 14,—*Hawick* again, 15 to 17,—*New Castleton* again 19,—*Canonby*, 20,—*Langholm*, 21 to 24,—*Lilliesleaf*, 26, 27,—*Midho'm*, 28, 29,—*St Boswells* again, 30 and 31st.

pupils, in the Mauritius, in consequence of his having become possessed of that article, it must, in some degree, although in a secondary point of view, be placed to the *credit* of my misfortunes ! as well as, another circumstance, which I will have occasion to allude to by and by.

But, cheap as the copy of Parkhurst's Lexicon may have been considered by the purchaser, and eagerly as he appears to have bid for it, with the assistance of his two friends in need, the price, as reported by the informant of Messrs Chambers, (and I have no reason to consider it incorrect,) seems to have been much above our common run of prices at these sales ; and if that was solely to be accounted for, from the circumstance of our having had *an African prince* as a customer, it is a pity, both for the sake of the civilization of that unfortunate race, and my own sake, that African princes of this description, had not been more widely scattered, through the various districts which my agents were at this time perambulating, for the arduous work they had to perform was getting to be so exceedingly up-hill—the remittances so miserably small—and the produce so excessively discouraging—that, even with the golden prospects that yet remained in the distance, in the north, I began to fear, that, although I might have enough to be prepared for my payments of the ensuing 4th of April, yet, it would go hard with me, to make up those stipulated for to be paid on the 4th of October, in the face of the coming summer, (the worst season in the year, for sales of the kind,)—and to put on more salesmen in such a season, and in such times, was therefore out of the question. —The most prudent step, therefore, I thought I could adopt, was to submit, first to my highest creditor, and after having met with his approbation, to the others principally concerned, what I entitled at top “ Reasons, &c. submitted by G. Miller, to the gentlemen to whom this is addressed, being *the greater part of his principal creditors*, for having an extension of NINE, instead of SIX months, between the periods of his future payments.” To which, the gentleman to whom I first submitted it, not only gave his unqualified consent, and confirmed it by his signature, but, before doing so, appended the following statement of his sentiments:—“ I have considered the

reasons adduced by Mr Miller for having the periods of his future payments extended, and, in testimony of my conviction of the reasonableness and propriety of the measure, in times of such unexampled difficulty, most readily agree, upon his settling his first instalment, to allow him to put back the second for three months, should he find it necessary for his accommodation, as also, to cancel his bill at 18 months from the first of October last, and to accept, in its stead, of another at twenty-seven months from the first of April next, including the difference of interest, which, allowing the present bill for the fourth instalment to stand as it is, in place of the third, will answer every requisite purpose of establishing an intervention of nine months, instead of six, betwixt each future payment, with the least possible additional expense for stamps."

To the honour of all the other gentlemen to whom it was addressed, they, at once, and at sight, put their names to this document, with its very suitable and appropriate recommendation ; and my mind was so far set at rest, in this respect.

Indeed, the reasonableness of the thing could not have been objected to by any one, while my great exertions, and the prudent way I had now gone to work, by adopting a measure so apparently replete with good consequences, towards the saving of stock, until we saw if there was any appearance of times mending, must have rather excited the goodwill and confidence of the gentlemen to whom I made the application, as otherwise—which was so far well, as I see that, in course of the month of March, I had been a good deal afflicted by a disease, to which I had before been sometimes liable, and to which, according to medical men, anxiety of mind is one of the predisposing causes.

In allusion to this, one friend writes, of date the 10th of March, " I am concerned to notice that the recurrence of any complaint should render you unable to attend to your business," &c. ; and in Mr ——'s letter, of the 24th of February, I see, that in allusion to the same complaint, which appears even before that time to have overtaken me, he expresses a hope that I am getting better, feelingly adding, " if it is the complaint I allude to, you are truly to be pitied ;" and as

this gentleman, must have been satisfied as to this point, before he appended his recommendation to the document above mentioned, it may have had some influence, independently of the reasonableness of the thing, of making him go about the business with so much alacrity ;—or, to use his own words, above quoted, to “ *most readily agree*” to the measure.

Yet, there was one cold-blooded individual, the same to whom I alluded on a former occasion, as being “ *a solitary exception*,” who also, at this time, neither seemed to pity me, in my struggles—my anxieties brought on by these struggles—nor my bodily indisposition, which, it is much to be feared, was the consequence of them both—but evidenced, by a certain overt act, that I might not be far wrong in the opinion I had formerly hazarded ;—and, by the legacy he left me, at the time of the explosion of the East Lothian Bank, to settle with the Directors afterwards in the best way I could, too fully demonstrated, that, in all my struggles, not only up to the time now under consideration, but up to the period at which that disastrous event took place, I had, indeed, experienced little sympathy from him, although, for the reasons mentioned formerly, I again abstain from entering into particulars.

My case, indeed, was certainly sufficiently distressing at this time, to have any need of aggravation from such a source ; and the greatest satisfaction I have, on reflection, is, that there was no other of my creditors who behaved in such a manner—that, as formerly, so now, *this one was the solitary exception*.

Meantime, I soon had, what I then considered another, and a great ground of comfort, in addition to what I received from the happy consideration, that I would now, at all events, whether the times mended or not, have, at least a longer time to turn my auction stock into cash ; and that was, that although my monthly remittances from the north, had been long in arriving at the extent to which I expected they would have come before now, they were at last, beginning to assume a more promising appearance ; as that of the 19th March had, I see, come up to £50,—which, coupled with the continued weekly demand for books—more, more books—borne out by

the statement of my agent, of the 22d, that he really stood in need of them ; as it plainly appeared, that, up to that date, he had £3,150: 13: 4,—or, in round numbers, *upwards of three thousand pounds worth subscribed for* :—all of which, could not fail to be somewhat exhilarating, after the gloom that had so recently enveloped my prospects, and made me so tremblingly alive to the difficulties of my situation.

It was during the exhilarating process my mind was undergoing, from such considerations as these, or rather, in the letter accompanying the encouraging statement above alluded to, that the *first* hint seems to have been given me, as to the propriety of extending the business still more northward, or into Caithness, &c., under the management of the young man's brother, who certainly, had already proved himself to be, a very efficient assistant and active labourer in the vineyard.

But although our correspondence continued, and both brothers had written me on the subject, and to the same purport, as to the apparent propriety of taking in the additional ground, with an offer of the services of the younger brother, in the management, in case I came to the resolution of making the attempt ; I judged it expedient to come to no final determination on the subject, until I had an opportunity of witnessing their proceedings on the spot, at Inverness, and conversing with them personally on the matter, and having business otherwise to take me to Aberdeen, about the time, I made up my mind to go forward, and set out on my journey on the morning of ———, the ——— of April.

## CHAPTER XX.—1817 (CONTINUED.)

In travelling, oddities sometimes met with on the road.—Leave Edinburgh for Aberdeen by the morning coach.—My fellow traveller on the present occasion.—Arrival at Perth.—Lose sight of my companion.—Find that he had walked forward, while the passengers dined.—Followed by the Guard.—Overtake the pedestrian.—Conversation that ensued after he had got into the coach.—Little thanks for my conduct.—Method I adopted, to bring about a reconciliation at Arbroath.—The Mystery elucidated.—I will ever feel happy for the *little* I was enabled to do on that occasion.—Arrival at Aberdeen in the morning.—Part with my friend on the most amicable terms, and retire to rest.—Proceed after breakfast to the business of the day, before my friend was stirring.—Business of considerable, but lamentable and unhappy importance, to transact.—Melancholy discovery.—Another example, although formerly alluded to, of strange events sometimes taking their rise from apparently very inadequate causes.—What may be truly said to have been the origin of my popular philosophy.—Conversation which led me, to resolve to proceed with that work.—The conclusion I came to in consequence of the information I received from Mr —.—Never afterwards lose sight of my object, until I had finally carried it into execution.—Upon my return to the inn in the evening, find my friend had gone to the country.—That I missed him, was not his fault.—Next morning early, leave Aberdeen for Inverness, by way of Huntly.—Transact business in passing through Elgin.—Cross, but not for the first time, the blasted heath of Shakespeare under cloud of night.—Arrive at Inverness next morning.—Meeting with the brothers.—Still come to no decision, in respect to extending the business farther northward.—Gaelic service in a Gaelic church.—Twisted spire of Inverness jail steeple.—A GHOST story, in which, one of my men was seriously frightened.—Extract from his letter written soon after.—How it is supposed to have originated.—Allusion to my own fright, in the inn at Dalwhinnie.—Pleasant party in coming through the Highlands.—One of them determined not to starve, or let others starve by the way.—A useful hint from Dunbar, received at Inverness.—Summer sales.—Routes of the different auctioneers.—Information received from Inverness, after my return.—Pleasing intelligence from another quarter.

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IN the course of my pilgrimage, I have more than once, fallen in with, a somewhat strange oddity of a character, in travelling by some of those convenient vehicles, which are now become so abundant on the road, whether in the form of His Majesty's Royal Mail, or under the less assuming appellation of Stage Coach.—But the gentleman who took his seat opposite me in the stage in which we started from Edinburgh, next morning, had nothing remarkable in either his manner or

appearance, if we except a strong disposition to sleep, as we whirled along ; and the care-worn, weather-beaten, and climate-broken appearance that appeared in his countenance, during his occasional naps ; which gave me, also an opportunity of observing written in the inside of his hat, while he nodded with it in his hand, the word **LIEUTENANT**, prefixed to his name. Indeed, the general appearance of the stranger, betokened that the emaciated figure that sat before me, was neither more nor less than a young military or naval officer, who had seen much, or, hard service, in foreign climes, returning to his friends in the north, to recruit his battered frame, or, if that were too late, to deposit his bones in the sepulchre of his fathers ; for he appeared indeed in a very exhausted and way worn state, and far more fit for a bed of repose, among his friends, or in some of the inns in Edinburgh, than for entering upon a journey, which it would take him a day and a night to accomplish.

We had exchanged, I believe, very few words by the time we arrived at Perth, and I had no opportunity of doing so, when we got there, for while I, and the other passengers had gone into the inn to dine, as was usual at that fair city, I learned that he, my fellow passenger, above alluded to, had walked forward in order to let the coach overtake him on the road.

The guard, who came from Edinburgh, did not seem to be aware of this circumstance, for he seemed rather disappointed, when, on looking round him for his perquisites, he missed one of his fare. However, on my mentioning that the gentleman had walked on before, he took it quite easy, and as a matter of no uncommon occurrence, for he sprung up on the coach and away we drove, two guards instead of one.

Upon overtaking the pedestrian, the guard dismounted, and after having paid his obeisance to him, and being satisfied apparently, in the usual way, opened the door and let him into the coach.—Ah ! little did I think, that in a way I so little expected it, I should unintentionally, have been *partly* instrumental, of depriving the poor traveller, who had got no dinner, and perhaps no breakfast, of his supper also !



So far, indeed, was I from suspecting any thing of the kind, that I told the gentleman frankly, and in a vein of rather good humour, than otherwise, that he might *thank me* for the honour done him by the guard coming so far after him, (for, by the by, he had made indeed considerable progress before the coach overtook him) when, judge my surprise, on his breaking out against me in such a strain of unqualified scurrility and bitter invective, as soon convinced me that I had committed an error, which, however unintentional on my part, had given great offence. I do not know whether any more conversation took place betwixt us, as we rolled along, down through the beautiful and fertile strath of the Carse of Gowrie; or, as we were jolted along the rough road that lay between Dundee and Arbroath; but, at the latter place, we were fated once more to exchange a few words, which not only led to a solution of the mystery, but was the means of establishing peace and harmony betwixt us, during the remainder of the journey.

At Arbroath, where it was usual to sup, as at Perth it was customary for the passengers to dine, I observed, that instead of sitting down at table with the other guests, my fellow traveller continued to traverse the room, without evincing the smallest inclination to partake of the repast. At this moment, perhaps it was, that the thought came across my mind, that the gentleman, for such I consider it my duty to call him, notwithstanding the rough harangue I had got, might be *without the means*, and I consequently became very pressing that he would partake of a little, or a slice upon a piece of bread, from my plate. Neither this, nor a glass of my toddy, however, he could be prevailed upon to taste; but in coming down the entry from the inn to the coach, I think it was, he so far profited, by the frank and open manner I had tendered my services to him, as to be induced, to make the real state of his case sufficiently known to me, and of his being even without the means of satisfying the guard and the drivers for the remainder of the journey; signifying at same time, that this circumstance gave him the most concern, and if I would accommodate him with the few shillings necessary for that

purpose, he would repay me on our arrival, or on meeting with his friends, at Aberdeen.

I take no praise or merit to myself whatever for advancing these few shillings—I had witnessed his privations on the road, as well as his exhausted appearance when he entered upon the journey—I had been partly the means of causing him to pay perhaps the last shilling from his exhausted resources which necessity, stern necessity, appears to have made him wish to reserve for another purpose:—To have refused, or turned a deaf ear to his request, would have betrayed a heart of flint, harder than any that for the last stage we had passed over. I therefore, without hesitation, gave him all that he required, and although (and it will soon appear, I mention it not in prejudice to my unfortunate, at the time, fellow traveller) I have not since been reimbursed, I have noted this little matter, trifling as it is, among those few reminiscences whose “report to heaven,” I have no doubt, will be in my favour, in the sight of HIM who estimates the value of a drop of cold water, not according to the extent of the gift, but according to the motive from which it proceeds, and the manner in which it is bestowed.

Upon our arrival at the inn in Aberdeen, at too early an hour in the morning for business, we retired each of us to his separate apartment, in order to refresh ourselves with a little sleep, for the fatigues of the day. At the usual hour, I had dispatched my breakfast, and as I had some business of rather an important nature to attend to, and a good deal, upon the whole, to do, in course of the day, was ready to depart from the inn, before my fellow traveller was stirring; but as I expected I would have an opportunity of seeing him again in course of the day, and as the concerns of A SUM to which his little trifle bore NO COMPARISON, demanded my more immediate attention, I proceeded to the place of my first destination, the house of ———, Esq. advocate, where I had business of considerable, but most lamentable and unhappy importance, indeed, to transact, viz. to ascertain the extent of the loss I had sustained or should sustain, by a recent bankruptcy in that city, (and which I too soon learned, would be not much under *three hundred pounds*)—my debt be-

ing £288 odds, while all that I ultimately recovered from Mr — who was the acting trustee on the estate, and remitted to me afterwards, was only a trifle above *thirteen pounds*!

It is amazing, however, to observe, in the course of providence, what strange events will sometimes take their rise, from what one would think, very disproportionate or inadequate, as well as unexpected, means. My book of Popular Philosophy, or the Book of Nature Laid Open, in an improved form, has now been for some time before the public—whether for good, or for evil—whether to my praise or dispraise, it is for that public to judge. But who, of my readers, would have conjectured, did I not record the circumstance, that that work, whatever may be its merits or defects, should have taken its rise from an interview occasioned *solely* by such a melancholy occurrence, as is above mentioned, and yet, that it did *so take its rise*, will soon appear as evident, as that the recent sale of books at Hawick, proceeded from, or was the consequence of my other misfortune.

Mr —, the gentleman upon whom I had occasion to wait, being personally acquainted with Dr Davidson, professor of Natural History in the Marischal College of that city, had had, it appears, some conversation with him previous to my arrival, in which my name, as the publisher of the Cheap Magazine, had been introduced, and in which the professor had signified a wish to see me at the time I was expected in Aberdeen, in consequence of the introduction of an article into the second volume of that little work, under the general running title of “The Book of Nature Laid Open,” &c. in favour of which, and its excellent adaptation to the purposes intended, the professor had expressed himself in very unqualified terms.

It may be readily supposed that I was somewhat surprised when Mr — put the question to me, if I would have any objections to eat an egg, or otherwise to spend the evening with him, in company with the professor—whose name, it is possible, I had never before heard of—but when he explained the matter to me, and the object of the meeting, I could only reply that it was entirely out of my power to accept of the

professor's kind invitation for the present, as I was already engaged for the evening until a late hour, and that, next morning early, I would be on my way to Inverness; which was the more a matter of regret to Mr —, whatever it might be to the professor, when I told him, that I was the more sorry for it, as I was not only the publisher and editor of the work in which it appeared, but was actually *the author* of that very article, which had attracted the attention, and had been fortunate enough to obtain such a distinguished share of the professor's approbation.

But in that conversation, so fortuitously, or accidentally brought about, so far as I had any concern with it, I need scarcely add, the seed was sown, that should afterwards spring up in my more improved and extended work of *Popular Philosophy*; for, on musing on the occurrence afterwards, I very naturally came to the conclusion, that a work which had attracted the attention, and had elicited such an encomium from one so very competent to decide on its merits, as a professor in that particular department of science of which I had presumed to treat, must have had, something more in it than I had been accustomed to think; and the consequence was, that I never afterwards lost sight of my object, and the intentions I formed at the time, to bring out, at an after period, if I could by any means find leisure for the purpose, an enlarged and improved edition of the work: which I was enabled to do some years afterwards under the above title.

Upon returning to my inn in the evening, with a gentleman with whom I had still some matters of business to discuss, I learned that my late fellow traveller and quondam friend, had been enquiring for me at different times, previous to his going to the country in course of the day, and had shewn a good deal of disappointment upon finding that he was not likely to meet with me. So this notice exonerates him from all share of the blame, and if he be still in life, and these pages meet his eye, I have so much confidence in his honourable intentions, as to expect, that he will yet embrace any favourable opportunity that may offer, of corresponding with, and getting the trifle, little as it was, conveyed free of expense to the writer.

Next morning I left Aberdeen on the top of the Mail, by way of Huntly, and after transacting some business, I think at Elgin, with a person who had been instructed to wait for me at the inn as the coach passed in the evening, arrived at Inverness, (after passing through the Blasted Heath of Shakespeare in course of the night) at the time I expected, early in the morning.

At this distance of time, I cannot recollect all that passed betwixt the brothers and me on the occasion of that visit, nor have I leisure at present to search for the necessary documents, to revive my recollections on the subject. It does not, however, appear that all the representations, and all the eloquence of the young men, even backed by the powerful argument, of the Inverness district subscription list, now amounting to within a little of three thousand five hundred pounds! or, in neat figures, to £3490 : 3 : 4, was still sufficient to induce me to enter into their views at that time, in regard to the farther extension of the business; for it appears, after reviewing their proceeds, looking over stock, seeing the men employed, &c. I returned home, without coming to any decision on that important subject.

Perhaps this hesitation at the time, on my part, arose from the yet disproportionate state of my remittances, and great accumulation of stock, for such a length of time; for it does not appear I brought any money from that quarter home with me, although some followed soon after,—and the balance in books in the warehouse, I see amounted to no less a sum than £1291 : 14 : 8.

It was on this journey, I observe, that I had an opportunity on the Sunday afternoon after attending divine service in the forenoon with my landlord in the English church, of hearing a Gaelic sermon in the Gaelic church,—that I first witnessed the effects of the earthquake in the twisted top of the jail spire—and that, I heard an account of the ghost story of one of our men, who had almost lost his wits in consequence of a fright he got, “on the night time,” to use his own words in a letter now before me, dated Keith, February 18, 1817, “between Achindown and Glass.”—“I am not right yet since I came through that moor; I was travelling some of

the night, wishing to be done as soon as possible, but I could not express to any person what I have seen and heard in that place, but the Almighty brought me safe from what it was."

It has been supposed by some people with whom I have conversed, and who are acquainted with these parts, that the ghost, on that occasion, was some character got up by smugglers to terrify those who had the temerity to intrude upon their secret haunts, in untimely hours,—for the safety of their operations under cloud of night.

But whatever was the cause of poor Sandy Ferguson's fright, I got a pretty severe one myself, in my bed in the inn at Dalwhinnie, on my return homewards through the Highlands by the coach, in company with one of the pleasant parties that one would desire to travel with in these regions, in course of which, instead of any of the party being poverty struck, or without the means of getting a supply of victuals, as was the case with my unfortunate companion outward bound, we had abundance, or more than abundance, in the well filled basket of our kind West India friend, who was resolved to live, and to let all others of his travelling companions live also, in these sterile regions, in case there had been a want of provisions, as well as of *locks* to the doors in the inns.\*

During the few days I remained at Inverness, I received a letter from Dunbar, of date, the 23d April, containing, besides information as to how my agents and auxiliaries in other quarters were coming on, the pleasant intelligence that a work, in the completion of which I was much interested, was drawing towards a conclusion, and in that letter, I have also a hint as to how we might advantageously dispose of some of our hands, in case I could discover any "good ground," as it was expressed, in the north; a circumstance that had not previously escaped my inquiries, I believe, among other things at Aber-

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\* It would appear, that our hospitable friend, had been strongly impressed with the belief, that there was some chance of starvation staring him in the face, in coming through the Highlands,—for he had brought provisions enough to carry us to Perth, even had there not been, that regular chain of Inns, which are now, and were then, situated at convenient distances on the road. The allusion to the *locks*, and to the fright at Dalwhinnie, will be explained in due time.

deen :—for, I had not the most distant intention of allowing our auctioneers, as yet, to encroach upon my Inverness district.

And to this I seem to have attended in the arrangement of what I would call our SUMMER SALES, for the return of J. T. with T. C. acting as clerk, dated the 14th, I see is from *Kirkcaldy*, on their way out,\* leaving only my *Edinburgh* P. C. to operate in the south, say in *Leith* and the *New Town of Edinburgh*, in the month of June, and in *West Linton* and *Peebles* in the month of July :—while the most productive of these sales, I see, was commenced by my son and his accompanying auctioneer, my *Glasgow* P. C. towards the end of July, at Peterhead.†—Of date, the 27th of May, I see I have a large tabular return from my agent at Inverness, containing particulars which I think I signified a wish to know, at the time I was north, near the end of April ; and by a letter from Mr —, of the 20th of July, I am agreeably informed, that the injunction on a certain book, (the one recently alluded to as drawing towards a close) which had put him to so much trouble, and me, to so much inconvenience, in lying out of, after it was completed, had been taken off.

\* The sales on the 9th to the 14th, were at *Kirkcaldy*.—16th to 19th, *Leyen*,—at *Elke*, 20th and 21st,—*Anstruther*, 22d to 26th,—*Leuchars*, 27th and 28th,—*Dundee*, 30th to July 5th—*Forfar*, 8th and 9th,—*Brachin*, 10th to 12th—*Laurence kirk*, 14th to 17th,—*Stonehaven*, 18th and 19th.—*Kirriemuir*, 22d, 23d,—*Glamis*, 24th to 26th,—*Meikle*, 28th to 30th—*Cuper Angus*, 31st to August 2d.—*Blair-gowrie*, 4th to 7th—*Caputh*, 8th, 9th—*Dunkeld*, 11th to 16th.—*Auchtergavin*, 18th, 19th,—*Bridge of Earn*, 20th to 23d,—*Auchterarder*, 25th to 28th.—*Crieff*, 29th and 30th,—*Dunblane*, September 1st to 3d,—*St Ninians*, 4th and 5th.—*Linlithgow*, 9th to 13th,—*Borroughstonness*, 15th to 17th.—*Bathgate*, 18th to 20th,—*Whitburn*, 22d, 23d,—*Blackburn*, 24th, 25th,—*Midcalder*, 26th.

† From which place, *Peterhead*, they sent their first return of date the 31st July,—from *Aberdeen*, on the weeks ending the 9th, 16th, 23d and 30th of August,—from *Old Meldrum*, Sept. 5th,—*Banff*, the 13th,—*M'Duff* on the 20th,—*Keith*, on the 29th,—and *Inverury*, Oct. 1st,—and in the intermediate dates, I see they were at *Twiff*, Sept. 4th, *Portsoy*, 18th and 19th,—and *Huntly*, 26th to 29th.

## CHAPTER XXI.—1817 (CONTINUED.)

**My own Ghost story.** Circumstances that may probably have contributed to lead to it.—Our recent conversation, in approaching the precincts of Loch Laggan, and of the dreary and desolated spot near *Shirra-more*, the place of assignation in his last spiritual conflict, of Angus, the hero of *Mrs Grant's* story of the *Highland Visionary*.—Retire to bed, and fall asleep in the Inn of Dalwhinnia.—Frightful dream, and fearful awakening.—Start up in my bed.—Strange noises continue to be heard in the adjoining apartment.—Ask my travelling companion if he is asleep.—Half asleep and half awake, rather ludicrous, but laconic answer.—Strange discovery, upon day light breaking in.—Things in general, exactly in the state, they were represented to me in my dream.—Other appearances in the morning.—The method of procedure, I adopted on the occasion.—The most mysterious parts of the mystery, satisfactorily accounted for.—How the others may have been occasioned.—Snow covered mountains in the morning.—Early journey, by the side of the snow poles, in the forest of *Drumochter*.—Breakfast at *Dalnacardoch*.—Pleasant ride by the side of the *Garry*.—*Braar Water*.—*Blair Athol*.—Pass of *Killicrankie*.—*Dunkeld*.—Employment at home after my return.—How the publication business there, and in the west, was kept moving.—Respectable remittances follow in succession from the north, with other satisfactory information.—Give my consent, at last, to the extension of the business to *Caithness*, &c.—Am informed of the departure of three men for *Sutherland*, &c.—The time when the young man, who was to take the management, went forward himself.—Fifth general or quarterly return, from *Inverness*, the best, and most productive, I had ever received.—Early commencement of our winter auctioneering campaign.—Places of operating, and the routes of the different operators pointed out.—Things upon the whole, in the publication line, seem to get on well and smoothly.—Disastrous tidings from my auctioneers, begin to pour in from all quarters.—Times, instead of mending, continue to get worse.—Corroborating extracts to that effect.—Friend *Peter's* fears too well founded.—I attempt to auction in a state of indisposition, and am obliged to give it up.—Laid up with a fever.—News of a rather disastrous nature from *Inverness*.—Loss of the *Santola* packet.—All my effects on board lost, and what is worse, all on board perished.—A bad omen, but we need not anticipate.

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I HAD too long been the victim to, and buffeted by, too many of the real and substantial evils of life, to be much taken up, at this period, with visionary fears and imaginary terrors. Indeed, I paid so little attention to the affair at *Dalwhinnie Inn*, as just to have noticed it in my reminiscences as the *curious dream*, I had, at that place.



As I must have said enough, however, to excite the curiosity of my youthful readers, in my last chapter, and it cannot be supposed that I, should have any wish to revive those feelings by any allusion to what took place a few miles on the one side of Loch Laggan, that I had taken so much pains to do away, in the *STORY OF LITTLE JOHN*, &c. in my Cheap Magazine for May 1813, in which, I had occasion to introduce what was reported to have taken place a few miles on the other side of that secluded lake; I shall, before proceeding to the weightier matters of this chapter, say a few words, by the way of clearing up and elucidating, what may appear of mystery, in the manner I had expressed myself towards the conclusion of my last.

I must then premise, that as we wheeled along to our domicile for the night, we were fully aware that we were approaching the precincts of *Loch Laggan*, among the seclusions of whose banks lived the Highland Visionary, who is the hero of Mrs Grant's supernatural kind of story, in her then recently published work on the "Superstitions of the Highlanders"—and indeed, a little more than an hour's exercise with a well trotting horse, along one branch of the road, would have brought us to *Shiramore*, in the neighbourhood of which, the tremendous, sterile, and desolated pass is represented to be situated, where Angus, it would appear, at the hour of twelve, had his last assignation with what he considered his unearthly visitor; at least, we read no more of him afterwards. And being so aware, it was very natural, that our conversation should take a turn to the subject of that work, although I do not recollect of its being again started at supper, or after our arrival at the Inn of Dalwhinnie.

Be this as it may, I had not long retired to bed, and fallen asleep, until I was awakened by a very curious, or, as I may well style it, alarming and frightful dream, if it may, indeed, be altogether denominated such, where there was so much of reality in the drama.

I dreamed that I lay in a strange house, in a strange bed, and that the foot of that bed stood exactly opposite to, and at a short distance from, the door, which opened up upon it into the room,—that, all on a sudden that door flew open

with a loud noise, immediately upon which, I found the hands of naturals, or supernaturals, busily at work pulling the bed clothes off me—I not only awakened, but sat upright in the bed, with my hands, no doubt, firmly clenching the bed clothes, in the fright, to prevent them being pulled from me—and after having composed myself so far as to recollect where I was, and what was more agreeable, that (it being a double bedded room) my West India friend, who had evidenced symptoms of being rather restless just before I fell asleep, was in his bed, at no great distance from me.

I ventured, therefore, to break silence, (for all was now hushed except something like a half smothered hollow kind of *sough* or whistling noise in the adjoining apartment, which made me conclude that the door had been actually burst open) by asking my fellow traveller, if he was asleep, to which he made answer in a very laconic way, as if half asleep and half awake, "O yes—but dont disturb me!" Upon which answer, we bantered him not a little, as we drove along to breakfast at Dalnacardoch inn, by the snowpoles of the forest of Drumochter, after the coach had started in the morning.

Well, after being satisfied as to where I was, and that there was another in the apartment beside me, it may be inferred, I lay more at ease until day light broke in upon me; when, judge my surprise, upon finding that I not only lay in a strange house, in a strange bed, but that the foot of that bed stood exactly opposite, and but a small remove from the door, which had indeed been forced open, and still stood open to its full extent, and most likely had been the cause of awakening both myself and my travelling companion (who it appeared, had indeed also met with some disturbance in his sleep) by the noise it occasioned.

Upon examining the door, the state of the large roomy apartment immediately adjoining—and making some enquiries at such of the people of the inn, next morning, as were stirring, a method of procedure that I would recommend to every person placed in similar circumstances, THE WHOLE MYSTERY, with the exception of some little matters which may be resolved into a slight touch of the night mare, (to which I was occasionally subject) operating on the con-

version and recollections of the preceding day, was very satisfactorily explained.

The house, it appears, was undergoing some repairs, the locks had been taken off the doors, and had not as yet been replaced—the panes in the windows in the large adjoining apartment, were for the present in a damaged state—the white hills around, bore ample witness, that a snow storm, accompanied with its usual blasts in those regions, had set in some time during the night, although it had not, fortunately for us, been of long continuance.—And now for the development—the wind had, during the prevalence of the storm, made its way through the shattered casements, and burst open the door, that must necessarily have remained unfastened for want of a lock,—and which, in its turn, had occasioned the noise by striking forcibly against one of the foot-posts of my bed, or such other interruption that might be in its way :—while the hollow whistling or sougling kind of sound, that appeared to come from the other apartment, can easily be accounted for, during the continuance of the storm. And so the whole mystery, with some little exceptions, that may be easily accounted for as formerly stated, may be said to be most satisfactorily elucidated.

It would appear, however, that I had not altogether recovered my firmness of nerve, or steadiness, by the time we had arrived at Dalnacardoch, for I distinctly recollect, that upon going into the garden there, while breakfast was getting ready, I made an awkward kind of stumble, from which, with some difficulty I recovered myself. No other thing, however, occurred worth noticing, in course of our journey homewards, if we except the pleasant ride we had by the side of the Garry,—Bruar Water, celebrated by Burns,—the Duke of Athol's beautiful grounds at Blair-Athol—the tremendous pass of Killierankie,—and the sublime and rocky scenery about Dunkeld, where the Highlands may be said to break suddenly upon the astonished traveller, from the south by the way of Perth, and to begin in reality.

But to return from this digression,—while the summer sales by auction, formerly noticed, were going on, I contrived to keep the publication business in the home circuits in as

full activity as possible, with such assistance as I had, or could procure; while in the west, friend Peter's absence, was in some degree, (indeed, so far as we judged it necessary at the time,) supplied by a near connexion of his own.—But how, it may be asked, did your northern agent come on after you left him?

I noticed formerly, that, in addition to a remittance which followed me, and which, by the date of the letter accompanying it, the 28th, must have reached me about the end of April, I had a large tabular return from him, of date, the 27th May.

This was, it appears, of the same date, accompanied by a remittance to a pretty respectable amount, and that was followed by another to the same extent on the 30th of June, which, and an offer in that letter to send me “the amount of expenses,” as he had formerly done the progress of subscriptions, “weekly,” in order to keep my mind more at ease in that respect also, must have contributed to procure my full consent, if any thing still continued to retard it, to his carrying his ulterior plans respecting Caithness, &c. into execution;—for, of date, the 16th July, he mentions the departure of three of the men for Sutherland, from which, some of them would no doubt push forward to open up new ground in Caithness, as, “the narrow strath” as he called it “of Sutherland,” could not be expected to afford of itself employment for so many;—and of date, the 12th August, I am advised, that he had ordered some of the men to proceed to Orkney without delay.

So that, although it appears it was some time after, before the young man, brother to my Inverness agent, reached the extreme point of his destination, to take the command in that quarter,—we had extended the business to the northern extremity of the island, or even beyond it, to those still more northern isles of the sea, the Orkneys, by the month of September. Indeed, at the time of the date of my fifth general return, which brings up matters to the 21st of October, it would seem, my new northern agent, had not as yet set out, although it could not be long after that period, as I see there is an entry of stock carried or transferred to his debit from the other agency, on the 3d of November.

The statements contained in the fifth general return must have gone far to reconcile me to the propriety of the step we had taken; for *it was certainly the best quarterly return I had ever received* from him, although it is to be lamented, that I never again received such a statement afterwards, but this could not be foreseen at the time.

Meantime, not a moment was lost in preparing to set timeously and vigorously to work with our winter auction campaigns, that being the season most fitted and adapted for the purpose. To take the season by the end, I see I had commenced my operations at *Dunbar*, so early as the 28th August, where I finished a pretty tolerable week, on Mr R.'s licence, on the 5th September, and other two on the 18th and 25th October; while, in the intervening time, and for a few weeks afterwards, he, Mr R. was sent to operate, accompanied, I think, by a young man (who had long been in my employment as a clerk) in different quarters of *East Lothian* and *Berwickshire*, until that young man was licensed himself, when he continued the sales, until he finished his career for the year (1817) at *Kelso*, as his predecessor had done on the year preceding, on the 31st December.\*

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\* These auction routes, including those sales at which I officiated,—and attempted to officiate myself at *Dunbar*, embraced as follows: *Dunbar*, Aug. 28, to Sept. 5—week ending October 11. *North Berwick* and *Linton*,—do. do. Oct. 18 and 25. *Dunbar*,—27 to 29. *Altholmesford*,—30, 31 and Nov. 1, *Dirleton*,—3, 4. *Prestonpans*,—5, 6. *Tranent*,—7, 8. *Ormiston*,—10. 11, *Penmitland*,—13, 14. *Gifford*,—15, 16. *Garvald*,—17, 18. *Whittingham*,—19, 20. *Stenton*,—21, 22. *Tynincham*,—26 and 27. *Cockburnspath*,—28, 29. *Coldingham*,—Dec. 1, 2. *Egremouth*,—3, 4. *West Roston*,—5, 6. *Chirside*,—4 nights ending Dec. 13, after I had been laid off on the 8, at *Dunbar*,—after which, under T. C.'s licence, Dec. 15 to 20, *Dunse*,—22, 23. *Eccles*,—24 to Jan. 1, *Kelso*.

J. T. our other auctioneer, who had, it would seem, left my service on business of his own, upon the expiry of his licence, beginning of October, I observe, had been again set to work in his own neighbourhood, or in *Leith*, in the month of November and beginning of December; and P. C. of Edinburgh, after making another experiment on his old ground, at *Haddington*, in the weeks ending the 11th, 18th, 25th Oct. and 1st Nov.—was again employed in *Edinburgh*, on the weeks ending 15th and 27th of November, and again at *Haddington*, week ending 27th December; while our northern detachment, continued their operations, from the time to which I had formerly brought them down,—viz. at *Inverury*, on the 30th September, and 1st of October,—in *Aberdeen*, from the 7th to the 18th,—*Stonehaven*, 21st and 22d,—*Bervie*, 23d to 25th,—*Monrosvie*, 27th to 1st Nov.—*Brechin*, 3d to 4th, do.—*Forfar*, 8th to 10th, do.—*Arbroath*, 13th to 15th,—and *Dundee*, week ending on the 22d, when my son would likely hurry home, to be present at *Dunbar* on the Fair week—the Fair holding on the Tuesday following:—whether he accompanied T. C. on his expedition to

Meanwhile our publication agents at home continued to do what they could to keep our business in that line, on as respectable a footing as possible;—while A. F. continued his exertions in the north,—and R. F. to get matters established on as good a footing as he could, in the new districts, over which he was now appointed to act as the principal, or governing agent; so that things upon the whole, seemed to move on pretty smoothly, in that way.

But alas! There seems to have been little else than *ups* and *downs*, allotted to me in this world,—for, the most alarming accounts began in a short time, to pour in from my auction agents in all quarters.

From *Prestonpans*, T. C. writes of the 6th November, “The people in this quarter, are in the utmost misery, and not able to purchase books, probably we may do some better in *Ormiston*, but I very much doubt it.”

Of November 12, P. C. writes from *Edinburgh*, “I never saw the like before, at this time of the year,—they will bid for nothing, and the house full of gentlemen, and the prices very small.”—While, J. T. with his first returns from *Leith*, up to the 15th November, begins, “I have had very bad success this last week,” &c.

All this was rather unfortunate, and I may say very provoking at such a time, for I had lately been reminded by Mr ——— in a letter on other business, although connected with that publication, that I had, in addition to my other demands coming round, a heavy payment to make, on account of a work, in which, I had taken a very considerable concern, on the 25th of the month, (November,)—but in which I was likely to be a good deal put about, in consequence of these short-comings, and having been so long kept out of the work itself, in a complete state, by reason of the injunction that had been laid upon it, and which, as I have already mentioned, had only recently been removed.

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the south afterwards, I do not distinctly recollect, but it is most likely he would, so far as he could be spared;—and meantime, so soon as he had got his canvassing, or publication matters adjusted, I find our western P. C. at his auction work again, in that quarter, on the 5th December, where he continued for a month, viz. up to the 5th January.

Upon making a true statement, and representation of the case, however, to some kind friends, that difficulty was got over, and I was thereby, the better enabled, to husband the resources I expected to derive from that valuable work, now that I had got it into my hands at last, in a complete form; without the alternative of forcing it prematurely into the market:—a thing that must, at the time, have been to me so very desirable.

Whether this unhappy turn in the produce of our auction sales, proceeded mostly from the circumstance of a *second late harvest*, or whatever cause, the facts above stated must speak for themselves, while those I am now about to communicate, too plainly evince, that, instead of mending and improving for the present, things rather continued to get worse, so that time and patience, both, soon became absolutely necessary, in a degree, of which I could previously have had no possible conception.

Indeed, P. C. of Edinburgh, who had, in his time, stood out so many auctioning campaigns, writes from *Edinburgh* of the 21st November, “I have auctioned this many years, never saw the like before this year.”

In J. T.’s returns from *Leith*, up to December 5, he says, “It was hardly possible to make a sale.”

In P. C.’s returns from *Glasgow*, up to the end of December, he begins by saying, “You have the transactions of other six nights before you, and a miserable week it has been—and towards the conclusion, this feeling and friendly person observes, “I am very sorry to hear of your being indisposed,—indeed, your long silence led me to think, that there was something the matter. I am much afraid, Sir, that the bustle of this life, and the extensive business in which you are involved, is too much for the constitution, however much your disposition leads for to be active and useful.”

To these remarks, I have added in my reminiscences, “Well said, friend Peter, and many thanks for the feeling manner in which you have expressed yourself, but, in **THESE TERRIBLE TIMES**,—with these **DISCOURAGING RETURNS**,—and with **SUCH ENGAGEMENTS** hanging over me, how could it be otherwise, than I should make myself active and useful, to the

greatest possible degree, that providence put within my power."—I might have rather said, that I should *endeavour* to do so,—for it appears, the indisposition here alluded to, was the effect of over exertion, at a sale, I had attempted to commence at *Dunbar*, on the evening of the 8th of December, in a state of indisposition, and contrary to the advice of friends, such was my anxiety to get forward, while the season for auctioning lasted; but from which, I was obliged to retire in a state of *fever*, which put an end to my personal exertions in that way for the winter!—was the occasion of my silence to my worthy agent,—and was the cause of my confinement for a considerable time afterwards, as will afterwards appear.

While, to complete the climax of my discouragements from a distance, my *Inverness* agent, not only informs me in a letter of the 10th December, of something that must have given me a good deal of uneasiness, but follows it up in that of the 29th, with the afflicting intelligence of the shipwreck of the *Santola* packet of *Kirkwall*, on board of which, was a fine young man, to whom he had intrusted a parcel of books to his brother in *Orkney*—but who must have gone down with the rest, as all my effects were lost, and "*all on board had perished.*"

This, I see, I remarked, was rather a bad omen, as connected with the late extension of our business to that quarter,—but we need not anticipate;—bad news will come soon enough when they do come,—and I had too much reason to think, as another year went down in clouds, that another storm was brewing, in a quarter from which we should not have expected it so soon,—and that, there *might still* be another in reserve.



## CHAPTER XXII.—1818.

Beset with evils.—Friendly expression of a kind friend.—Enter the year 1818, with trembling steps.—My New Year's Day walk this time, must have been more limited than the last.—My indisposition continues.—Another agent alarmed by my silence.—His manner of expressing himself, different from the others.—His *dreams* in the night,—What confirmed his suspicions.—Appalling motto to my new retrospect, the meaning of which I endeavour to soften.—Affecting extract from my retrospect of 17th January.—Matters do not mend by the end of the month.—Small returns from auctioneers.—Auction route described.—Auction room broken into, and books stolen.—No remittances yet from the Caithness and Orkney districts.—A considerable falling off, in the sixth general quarterly return, from my Inverness agent.—Still confined “within the walls of a house.”—A significant hint, in a few intelligible words, that I must no longer be sanguine in my hopes, as to my long anticipated golden harvest, from a certain quarter.—The reasons why.—Sundry important questions, arising out of that information, coupled with the reasons assigned.—One great benefit, attendant on my long protracted, or slow convalescence.—How I availed myself of it.—Draw up a statement of the whole of my recent proceedings, and the results of these proceedings.—My resolution in consequence, after mature consideration, and seeing exactly how matters stood.—Submit my statements to my creditors, with an address, including references to the several statements.—Abstract, being nearly a full copy of, that address.

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It may readily be supposed, that, with so many poor returns coming in from all quarters—the dreadful sacrifices of stock that the auctioneers were obliged to make, even to insure these returns, small as they were—the increasing gloominess of the prospect around me—and my still continued indisposition, which prevented me from taking such an active part as I would otherwise have done personally, in this *dreadful tug of war*—or, as I may now term it, *mortal fray*, which called forth the following expression of pity from a friend, who well knew how I was situated, and had occasion to write me about the time—“I am truly sorry to notice your unfortunate situation, at such a time especially.”

It may readily be supposed, I say, that, so beset with evils, and so many hard considerations pressing upon me, I must have entered the year 1818 with trembling steps, and a mind approaching to, if it had not already reached, the acme of

despondency ; and it was not likely, that, at *this* returning season, I should have the benefit of my solitary sea-side walk, to aid me in calling in, and concentrating, my distracted thoughts, and giving them their proper direction, to past, present, and future occurrences ;—for, if, on the *new-year's day* preceding, I was limited in my walk, to the Church hill, or to a very little distance beyond the toll-bar, (which the traveller will observe adjoining to the church-yard wall, to the east, or south-east, of the town,) I have every reason to believe, from what, not only friend Peter, but my other agent at Inverness, reminded me of in his correspondence, that my excursion, could not, at this period, have extended beyond the boundaries of the premises I occupied. I say, my other agent at Inverness—for he too, it appears, had been alarmed at my silence, although he expressed himself, and the state of his feelings, in a manner somewhat different from my lowland agent in the west, and in what, the historian of the exploits in the neighbourhood of Lochlaggan formerly alluded to, might have denominated, a more characteristic language for a native of the district or shire, in which is situated the isle of Skye, as being tinctured a little with the superstition of the Highlander, if not, claiming some alliance with those who were gifted with the second sight.

In a letter from this person, which I see I had received in course of the last week of the year, he expresses himself in the following manner :—“ I had conjectured you was not well, from *my dreams in the night time about you*. What still confirmed me in the opinion, *YOUR BEING PUNCTUAL IN WRITING*.” Hence, it is not to be wondered at, that I should commence my new retrospect, which, I see, is dated January 17, under circumstances that led me to adopt, in the motto, *the language of despondency*, although, as if ashamed of myself, I immediately proceed to state the cause of that despondency, which I plainly state is not at “ the mercy of God,” but “ after all my exertions, and the great Searcher of hearts knows well what I have suffered on that account, of being able, to realize, the whole of my instalments !”

This short extract must give the true state of my feelings at the time I wrote that retrospect, on the 17th, and the mat-

ter could not be considered as any way mended, or improved, when I had got in all my returns up to the end of the month—when the small returns from P. C. and T. C., the only two auctioneers I had in the field this month, are considered\*—that, those from the latter, had been rendered the more discouraging, by one of them, viz. that dated *Denham*, 22d January, being accompanied by the information, that, on the preceding night, the auction-room had been broken into, and some of the books stolen, although the exact amount, at that date, had not been ascertained—that I had as yet received no remittance from the new ground, at Orkney and Caithness, aggravated by the recollection of the loss by sea I had also so recently sustained in that quarter—and that, upon the receipt of the sixth general quarterly return, from my other northern agent, bringing up matters to the 26th of January, instead of an increase to my monthly remittances, I observed, as I had already, indeed, begun to anticipate, *a considerable falling off*, heightened by the consideration, of what he does not fail to remind me of in that letter, viz., “I am sorry to observe you have and are still confined to the walls of a house.”

Which information, and which recollection, if it had been possible it could otherwise have escaped my memory, would be no way lightened, and no way alleviated, by what follows in this letter, in which, he gives me to understand, in too distinct terms to be misunderstood, that I must no longer be too sanguine in my prospects from that quarter, in these few, but intelligible words,—“What can be expected from a scattered country, not HALF thickened—the distance to travel—scarcity of cash?” &c.

This may be all very true, my friend; but why did not these matters strike you sooner; and why were not these, it might have been *then* useful hints, communicated to me, previous to getting my consent to extend the business farther to the northward? A scattered country, and not half thick-

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\* I see my western P. C.'s returns from the beginning of the year, were on the 5th, 12th and 17th, from *Glasgow*,—26th, from *Greenock*,—and the 31st, from *Port Glasgow*:—T. C.'s, from *Kelso*, 1st January,—*Ednam*, 2d and 3d,—*Yetholm*, the week ending the 10th,—*Jedburgh*, do. 17th,—*Anerum*, *Denham* and *Hobkirk*, on the 24th,—and *Hawick*, &c. to the 31st.

ened! What, then, has become of all the prodigious expense I have been put to, for such a length of time? What of my **NOW, SHOULD-BE, UPWARDS** of *five thousand pounds* worth of books subscribed for?—while I have only got, of remittances, in all, up to this date, £581: 14s., and that at the further risk, expense, and inconvenience, of having stock so much sunk in your hands, in the warehouse and otherwise, as to leave a balance, at this date, of upwards of *fifteen hundred pounds*, or, say, in figures, neat £1,514: 13: 7?

With all these considerations weighing upon my spirits, it may easily be imagined how I was affected; but in this instance, as in others, it was of no use to give vent to unavailing complaints; and, as there was one great benefit attendant upon my protracted convalescence, viz., that it *gave me time to consider, and look more minutely into things*, than I otherwise, in the midst of such a multiplicity of engagements, could have done—it will soon be seen, that of this “benefit of affliction,” I availed myself to a no ordinary degree, in the very comprehensive, yet luminous statements, I drew up of the whole of my proceedings, and results of these proceedings, to the beginning of the month of February, and which, I deemed it advisable, upon mature consideration, and seeing exactly how matters stood, to submit to my creditors, with the following address, containing the necessary references to those minute statements,—of date the 21st of that month:—

“Gentlemen,—I have just finished the bringing up a statement of the proceeds of my book sales, to the beginning of the present month; and as I plainly see, after the experiment of sixteen months including the *Two Winters* included in my engagement, that **SIXTEEN SHILLINGS** per pound is *now* out of the question, and, that it would only be sacrificing myself and the time of my family, to no purpose, longer to attempt it. I feel it an imperious duty, which I owe to you and myself, to lay these papers before you, and to submit to your consideration the **ONLY PLAN**, by which, if it is timeously adopted, **OR GONE ABOUT IMMEDIATELY**, I think, I shall still be able to realize, or make up the 14s.

“ I say, gone about IMMEDIATELY ; for even this, as you will soon discover, gentlemen, will be an ARDUOUS TASK ;— and, it cannot be supposed, that a mind, racked as mine has been, by repeated disappointments, can long preserve sufficient energy for such an undertaking ; while it must be evident, from a first glance of the produce of my WHOLE SALES, (See Documents C and E) that, by the 4th of April—the time when my third instalment, according to my original engagement, falls due—I shall not, in all likelihood, have realized *nearly so much* AS I HAVE ALREADY PAID for my first two instalments of the larger sums, and for the bills granted at fifteen months, for the smaller sums, which were cleared off on the 4th January last.

“ To attempt to tell you all that I have done, gentlemen, to spare you this disappointment and myself the pain of making such a report, would be taking up your time to little purpose, particularly, as you will have an opportunity of judging of it, and be the better able to appreciate how far I have merited, and still continues to merit, your confidence in this business, by what follows, and its accompanying documents.

“ Suffice it to say, that I entered upon my task with an alacrity, and have persevered in it for such a length of time, in spite of the most formidable and unforeseen obstacles, as must convince every one of the sincerity of my intentions, and how much I had my object at heart. The same day from which my bills were dated, viz., the first of October, 1816, witnessed the commencement of a set of operations for the timeous disposal of my stock, which, as far as I could command events, have been continued without interruption, ever since.

“ In pursuit of my object, as you will perceive by the statements, A and B, I have tried almost every corner of the land where I thought it most likely that sales could be effected with advantage. All the available members of my family have, in one shape or other, been occasionally employed in the business, and two of them are at this moment traversing the country as clerks to the sales.

“ In regard to myself, I have sacrificed every idea of ease or relaxation—have devoted my days and my nights—all the energies of my mind, and powers of my body, to the same purpose ;—so that, you will not be surprised to hear, that in December last, immediately after my individual exertions at a book sale here, *in a state of indisposition* I was thrown into a *FEVER*, from the effects of which I am not yet perfectly recovered.

“ Notwithstanding all this, I would have persevered, and gone on still, to the best of my ability, *had hope remained*—could I have seen the most distant probability of *ultimate* success ;—but the *TIMES*, gentlemen, the *DREADFUL TIMES*, I have had the *additional misfortune* to encounter, in the year that has just passed, have, as you will soon discover, continued to defeat my exertions, as they have completely baffled all my calculations. For the truth of the first of these assertions, I have only to refer you to *the result* of my *WHOLE SALES, TO THE BEGINNING OF THE PRESENT MONTH*, in the documents C and E, already pointed out, in connection with the uniform language of *ALL* the letters (F) ; and for the latter, I have only to request, that you will have the goodness to compare the average produce of the *first three months*, in A, with that of the thirteen months immediately following and commencing on the first of January, 1817, in B. Facts like these, gentlemen, are indeed stubborn things, and need no comment.

“ In forming my estimate as to the probable produce of the stock, in September 1816, I was guided by the only criterion I thought myself justifiable in adopting on the occasion. I founded my calculations on what I then considered, and do still consider, the best possible data—*THE DATA OF EXPERIENCE*. I had made some sales in the preceding winter, and the result of these sales being in my possession, I considered, as proper grounds to go by, in forming my conjectures as to what might be expected ; for, at that time, (*i. e.* the beginning of September, 1816,) I could have no possible conception, that a winter, reckoned so disastrous as that of 1815, was to be followed by another still more disastrous, and that, by a *whole year*, more so than either, for the disposal

of a stock such as mine—if we take into consideration the impoverished state of the country, and the exhausted finances of those, likely to have become, *in better times*, purchasers at my sales.

“The proceeds of the sales just alluded to, you have, gentlemen, in D; and if I have been mistaken in the conjectures that I formed from them, in consequence of *such times as were confessedly never before witnessed, by those long experienced in the profession*, (See No. 4, F,) I trust, you will reproach me the less on that account, and at least give me credit for the goodness of my intentions, especially, as you see, I have also been borne out in my calculations, by the produce of **THE FIRST THREE** months of the present experiment, (A.)—Indeed, gentlemen, I must here say, that in forming such an estimate, with the views I had at the time, although I have suffered much uneasiness by the consequences, I **DID NO MORE FOR YOU** than what *every honest man should have done in my situation*.

“Had things uniformly turned out according to this estimate, it must be evident, that I would have realized, or nearly realized, **HALF RETAIL PRICE**, in the disposal of my books by auction, (the only available method, indeed, left me to realize such a sum of ready money in a limited given time,) and this, with the aid I confidently expected from other sources, which I am sorry to say have also turned out sources of disappointment, in consequence of the same cause, (See H, No. 1 and 2,) was fully sufficient to enable me to meet my engagements as to produce.

“Agreeably to this, suppose the amount of the book part of my stock to have been (for it was somewhat about that sum) £7,500,—the retail value of which, adding 25 per cent. would be £10,000. Now, this would yield, at *half price*, £5,000, a sum which, as you will observe, from the produce of A, I had some reason to calculate upon, allowing any short-comings in point of expenses, to be sufficiently covered, by the promising prospect from other sources, about a twelve-month ago, or beginning of the year 1817, (G, Nos. 1, 2, 3.) Indeed, at that time, as some of the gentlemen concerned well know, I confidently expected a very different result, and

my only concern was, **FOR MORE TIME**, in order to enable me the better to husband my resources. (See again G, No. 3.)

“ Things, however, you will see by B, assumed a very different complexion in course of 1817, or in the thirteen months following the first of January that year; but, as it is only the average produce of the **WHOLE TIME**, with which we have to do, in ascertaining exactly how matters stand at present, it is to C, gentlemen, to which, I now more particularly call your attention. That statement, you will observe, contains the average produce of A and B united, from which, it is evident, that instead of **ONE HALF**, the utmost I can *now* expect to realize from the disposal of £10,000 retail value of stock, in the event of my proceeding as I have for some time being going on, would be only **ONE THIRD**, or £3,333: 6: 8, being short of £5,000, *nearly* **A WHOLE INSTALMENT**. Indeed, were I obliged to push sales in the present depressed state of the country, I believe you will be disposed to agree with me, when I say, that it might be even problematical, whether *I could possibly* make up the 12s.

“ From a consideration of these statements, and the gloomy prospect held out in my recent communications from all quarters (as in F), together with the little chance of things bettering, **IN TIME TO BE OF SERVICE TO ME**, even allowing there were some prospect of their getting better, it may strike some of you, gentlemen, that nothing short of a *total relinquishment of the THIRD INSTALMENT, and MORE TIME ALLOWED to pay up the FOURTH*, will answer my purpose; and such, I confess, was the idea that first struck myself.

“ Upon second thoughts, however, and still actuated by the same motive that induced me to make so liberal an offer at first, viz., *an anxious desire that the least possible loss might be sustained by any one, on my account*, I am willing to make an effort towards making up the 14s., *providing the matter can be adjusted, &c.*, and the following proposal, for the reasons already mentioned, meets with your immediate acquiescence.”

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[The full amount being stated, it is deemed unnecessary here to enter into the particulars.]



"I am extremely sorry, gentlemen, that circumstances should have arisen to make such a proposal necessary ; but you are now made acquainted with these circumstances, by a detail of facts that cannot be disputed ; and, keeping these in view, I have no hesitation in leaving you to decide, whether, in this proposal, I have not still left to myself A HARD ENOUGH TASK TO PERFORM, and if a desire to promote your interests to the utmost of my power, is not more apparent in such an arrangement, than any consideration of my own immediate ease and comfort.

"I am, very sincerely,

(Signed) "GEO MILLER."

"*Dunbar, February 21, 1818.*"

## CHAPTER XXIII.—1818 (CONTINUED.)

The wonder, how accounted for, that I did not, at this period, altogether give up the contest.—Still some struggling rays of hope.—Had been in search of new ground for sections, and wished to try the experiment.—Still had reason to look for something coming from my lately extended ground in the publication line, to the northward.—A welcome stranger from Inverness at last arrived, though late in his arrival.—Combined effect of a certain combination of circumstances.—A hard enough task still left me to perform.—How my new proposal was received.—Sentiments of Mr ————Additional, of Mr ————One firm assumes a rather inexorable attitude.—Where is it now?—Another appropriate extract from *The Complete English Tradesman*.—No relaxation in my talk.—Extensive section routes.—The parties may, at times, approach or cross each other's paths, but no danger of clashing.—Plans of all the routes digested at, and sent from head quarters, at Dunbar.—My situation in these days no sinicure.—Publication returns of a very varied complexion.—My Highland manager marries a Highland lady.—Agreeable prospects in consequence.—Meet with some reason to indulge in them.—It is arranged that I again go north personally, to meet the brethren at Inverness.—Information from one quarter no way discouraging.—Small remittances hitherto from the Orkney and Caithness district.—Make up my mind to get the business in that quarter wound up as expeditiously as possible.—My western agent's route to the northward.

It may be a matter of wonder indeed, that, upon discovering such havoc to have been made in my stock, beyond what I

had calculated upon, and, when, as I thought I had some reason to expect a contrary result, I did not at once give up the contest in despondency, and resign the reins at last in despair. Even with all the consolations of religion, and often tendered acquiescence in the decrees of Omnipotence, I could have little more to hope from my now apparently hopeless task, in which, I had been so repeatedly foiled in my attempts to get forward, and in looking before and around me, the gloominess of desolation seemed to obstruct my path, and to be settling fast down upon my prospects on every side.

There must have been, and I see there were, even in the midst of these cheerless prospects, some straggling rays of comfort, or slender grounds for the ever grasping hands of hope, to lay hold upon.—My auctions of late, indeed, had not been productive, but it appears I had been in search of *new* ground, by making enquiries, as far as the Mull of Galloway, to the west and to the south :—and in my correspondence with my northern agents, I had been endeavouring to ascertain, what probability there was, of my doing any good, by carrying these sales into Caithness, and Orkney, at the most proper time, when the annual fair in Kirkwall took place in the ensuing August, which, although somewhat remote, was still, notwithstanding, in consequence of the answers, I received a strong ground for hope.

Add, to these, that although I had as yet, received no remittance from my Caithness and Orkney agent, yet, the circumstance of my having advised him in a letter, on the 24th, to engage a new man, shews, that I was still, although I might have my fears, not altogether destitute of some drops of comfort from that quarter ; while, a pretty decent remittance from my Inverness agent, of date the 3d February which made some amends for the short comings, up to the 26th January, must have contributed much, to raise, my so lately depressed hopes from that part of my now extensive vineyard. All these considerations, combined, I say, must have contributed much to induce me, to make a proposal, which, towards the end of my address it will be seen, I considered in the light, as “ STILL A HARD ENOUGH TASK TO PERFORM.”

That proposal was submitted, in the first place, to the same gentleman, who on the former occasion, was indulged with this preference, if, under such circumstances, it may be called an indulgence, in consequence of his being the highest creditor, and who, as an evidence of his going readily into it, as well as of his unqualified approbation of the reasons, and motives that induced me to make it, wrote as follows, and commenced the signatures by adhibiting his own name to the document.

“ ———, Feb. 1818.

“ I have duly considered the reasons adduced by Mr Miller for having a modification of composition allowed him, as also more time to pay up, what I think (although the greatest sufferer by the measure) as much as can reasonably be expected, after the various statements and affecting representations he has presented.

“ In conformity with which opinion, I hereby agree and recommend to the other creditors, in as far as they consult their own interest, and Mr Miller’s ability to pay, to do the same, viz :”— \* \* \* \* \*

[It has been thought unnecessary to repeat the particulars here, they being matters of only a temporary moment.]

“ In acceding to, and recommending this measure, viz. a total of 14s. per pound, I do so from the perfect conviction of the inadequacy of the funds to do more, *solely arising* from the depressed state of the book trade, WHICH HAS CAUSED A VERY GREAT SACRIFICE TO BE MADE IN ORDER TO REALIZE THE INSTALMENTS ALREADY PAID, which from the severe pressure of the times, has exceeded my expectations. In recommending this to the attention of Mr Miller’s creditors, their interests are consulted, for should the stock be brought, at present, into market, the above offer could not be realized.”

(Signed) “ ———.”

On presenting the above to the gentleman second in order in the list of heavy sums, he was pleased to add, in his hand-writing :—

“ I have gone over the different statements produced by Mr Miller, relative to his affairs, and I am perfectly satisfied that the utmost exertion has been made, and the greatest accuracy

exhibited in the management of these affairs, but that, from the depressed situation of the times, it is utterly impossible for him to meet the engagements he came under to his creditors ; and therefore, I agree to accept of 14s. per pound for my debt, the balance of which composition remaining due to be paid at the dates specified by him." (Signed) " — — — "

After obtaining these I need hardly add, that the signatures of the other gentlemen principally concerned, were most readily procured as they were severally applied for ; one gentleman indeed took a little time to consider of it, but as the conduct of that gentleman gave me much satisfaction at the meeting on the 16th September, and he *then* seemed quite disposed to leave it to myself to make out of the stock what *I could*, I can only account for his backwardness, on the supposition, that he had not had time, or, it may be patience, to look over those *affecting* representations, as my highest creditor had denominated them ; and I have no doubt, that now, when he shall have an opportunity to look over this address, and its accompanying documents in print, although labouring under the disadvantage of the want of the statements referred to, (which would have taken up too many of my pages,) he will not *regret* his kind acquiescence also.

I had, indeed, a little trouble with a few of the smaller sums—these gentlemen not duly considering that whatever their disappointments may have been—mine, after such (what shall I call it) murderous exertions, to insure a contrary result—must have been much greater.

There was one firm that assumed a most inexorable attitude, and I do not recollect how far they departed from it at the last, and I know not *where* to enquire now ; for they have long since met the fate that has so often been observed to follow such unfeeling conduct, when such tender hearted people come to be in distress themselves.—Yes !—In process of time, the house of ——— and ———, came also to be unfortunate, and they assuredly, could scarcely, in allusion to my case, put up the prayer to *their* creditors, " that mercy I to others shewed, that mercy shew to me." But be that as it may, the firm of this house has been broken up and scattered to the winds of heaven, and *where* the inexora-

ble partner (for the other was an easy, canny, sort of a man) is, I know not ;—if indeed he is still in existence.\*

While these matters were in the way of adjusting, and carrying into effect, it is not to be understood that I relaxed one moment in my exertions to keep things in a progressive state. My one auctioneer, T. C. continued his operations by *Hawick, Selkirk, and Galashiels—Earlston and Lauder—Westruther, Gordon and Stichel—Eccles and Coldstream*, until he returned and had sales for a week or two in *Dunbar*, and neighbourhood—say from 9th to 31st March ; immediately after which, he was marched off on a very extensive round, comprehending a considerable quantity of *new*, and to us, *unknown ground*, and embracing the tedious circuit of not fewer than *seven counties*, as will appear by the annexed statement, until for a reason that will afterwards be explained, he was stopped in his career, at Bathgate, in Linlithgowshire, towards the end of June.†

\* My very considerate and rational friend, the author of the *COMPLETE ENGLISH TRADESMAN*, formerly quoted, justly observes, “ If then the contingent nature of trade, renders every man liable to disaster, that is engaged in it, it seems strange that tradesmen should be outrageous and unmerciful to one another, when they fall ; and yet, *so it is*, that no creditor is so furious upon an unhappy insolvent tradesman, as a brother tradesman of his own class, and who is at least liable to the same disaster, in the common event of his business. Nay, I have lived to see, *such is the uncertainty of human affairs*, and especially in trade, the furious and outrageous creditor become bankrupt himself, in a few years, or perhaps months, after, and begging the same mercy of others, which he but just before denied to his *not more* (read less) unfortunate fellow tradesman, and making the same exclamation at the cruelty and hard heartedness of creditors, in refusing to comply with him, when, at the same time, his own heart must reproach him with his former conduct.”

In order, however, to counteract any bad effect that might be supposed to arise from the inculcation of this lenient doctrine, our very sensible author goes on to state, “ I do acknowledge, that if there’s an evident fraud, if he can detect the bankrupt in any wicked design, if he can prove he has effects sufficient to pay his debts, and that he only breaks with a purpose to cheat his creditors, and he conceals a part of his estate when he seems to offer a sincere surrender ; if this be the case, *and it can be made appear to be so* ; for, in such case, too, we ought to be very sure of the fact, then, indeed, no favour is due, and really none ought to be shewed.”—To which I, and I dare say, every *honest man* among my numerous readers, will be disposed to say, Amen.”

† That route commenced at *Whitsome* on the 23d March, to which place, some of his Coldstream remnants would likely have been forwarded to meet him. After which he proceeded by *Paxton and Allanton, Swinton, Letholm, Birgham and Greenlaw* in *BERWICKSHIRE*, till the 4th April. Then by *Smallholm, Bowden, and Lilliesleaf* in *ROXBURGHSHIRE*, to the 11th. Afterwards by *Laugholm, Canonby, Springfield, Annan, Braidkirk, Ecclefechan, Lockerby, and Lochmaben*, in *DUMFRIESHIRE*, to the 2d of May. Then upwards through *Galloway* by *Castle Douglas, Gatehouse, and Creetown* in *KIRKCUDBRIGHT*.

While my other auctioneer (P. C.) broke ground at *Paisley*, on the 4th of February, and after progressing also through different localities in *AYRSHIRE* and *DUMFRIESHIRE*, ended that series at *Lanark*, on the 2d of May.\*

I observed, or might have observed, before, that two of our northern parties once approached so near to each other, that the one was in Stonehaven, while the other was in Aberdeen, without either being likely ever to know if an accidental meeting had not taken place on the Sunday on Aberdeen Pier,—and, I observe by my returns, from my southern expeditionists, that on Sunday the 26th April, the one party must have been in *Braidkirk*, in the neighbourhood of *Ecclefechan*, while the other was in *Dumfries*.—Indeed T. C. must have crossed the very road P. C. had taken on the Monday before, on his route to Castle Douglas from Lochmaben, on Monday the 4th of May. All these things I could not but know, although the parties themselves, at the time, knew nothing of the matter.

There was little danger, however, of any of my auction parties ever interfering or clashing with each other, for the plans of their routes, and the order and time of their marches, were all sent from head quarters at Dunbar, and had I had no other thing to vex me, or to distract my attention, I cannot help thinking, that including the *Inverness, Sutherland, Caithness, and Orkney publication concerns*, I must have had no sinecure of it,—to regulate so much machinery, and keep such a number of wheels in unceasing motion at one time.

Indeed, no General could be more incessantly busied with his plans in the midst of his most active campaigns, than I was with

*SHIRE*, to the 12th. Afterwards, by *Wigton, Newton Stewart, Portpatrick, Stranraer, Glenluce*, and *Newton Stewart* again, on his return, in *WIGTONSHIRE*, to the 28th. Then in *New Galloway*, in *KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE*, on the 29th and 30th. Afterwards in *Monnyhive, Thornhill, Sanquhar*, and *Wanlockhead*, in *DUMFRIESHIRE*, to the 9th June. Then by *Douglas, Biggar, Carnwath*, and *Iron Works*, (supposed *Wilsontown*) in *LANARKSHIRE*; and *Bathgate*, in *LINLITHGOWSHIRE*, till the 22d.

\* The route of this auctioneer, after breaking up from *Paisley*, in *RENFREWSHIRE*, on the 14th February, was, by *Belth, Stewarton, Dalry, Beltoats, Kilmanning, Irvine, Ayr, Kilmarnock, Galston, Newmills, Mauchline, Cairns and Cumnock* in *AYRSHIRE*, to the 4th of April. By *Sanquhar, Penpont, Dumfries*, and *Thornhill*, in *DUMFRIESHIRE*, to the 28th, and by *Leadhills* to *Lanark*, in *LANARKSHIRE*, by the 2d of May.

my *routes*, until the maps of the Scottish counties had become so familiar to my eye, that, as I have expressed myself, I could almost chalk them out from memory; and the fares, and the distances across the Pentland Firth, and over the various channels which separate the Islands of Orkney, had become so well known to me, that, it might appear to a stranger who heard me talk on such matters, that I had been long accustomed to ply in those seas, and voyage it across these numerous ferries myself.

While the auctioneering business was thus kept moving in the most active manner, in the south, &c. things continued to go on in the publication line, much in their usual way in the north,—the usual remittances coming from time to time, with occasional information, sometimes of a hopeful and encouraging, and sometimes of a depressing and discouraging nature,—nor do I recollect any thing particularly worth the noticing at this particular period, until I received intelligence that my Highland manager, had got married to a Highland lady, who having brought him a fortune, made me the better pleased with the intelligence, as it afforded *him* the means of buying up the stock and the ground, and consequently relieving *me* of a business, which had now become both troublesome and irksome to me, but which might, when conducted by the young man on his own responsibility, prove a source of amusement as well as profit to himself.

I accordingly lost not a moment in entering upon a correspondence with him on the subject, and after the exchange of several letters, in the month of May, it ended in the understanding, that, I should go north, once more, and meet him and his brother, (who had previously given indications of being already tired of *his new ground*, farther northward,) at Inverness, on Saturday the 20th of June, in order, that we might have an opportunity to converse personally on the subject.

There were still some other matters I had in view, in that journey, but, this, now became, the great engrossing concern, and I was the more hopeful of being able to succeed in my wishes, in that respect, from the circumstance of the young man's brother, so far from being against any arrangement of

the kind, that he distinctly stated, in a letter written to me, just before he set out from Wick to Sutherland on his way southwards, "mean time, I am in the thoughts, that you and my brother will come to an agreement about the Inverness circuit, when we all meet."

Indeed, it was very natural he should be disposed to write in that stile, as it was for the present uncertain, whether, or how, he would now be employed by me, and the very circumstance of his brother's becoming the proprietor of the stock and the business, even if he had inclined to take his cane in his hand and act the Highland gentleman himself, now that he had got his Highland lady, could not fail, to make bread, for him, in some department or other connected with it. So that, I had nothing to fear, but rather every thing to hope from his return, and being present also at the meeting.

Indeed, as the returns of this young man (which must have disgusted one of his honourable feelings, as to that unfortunate district) had, up to the first of June, with the exception of two small remittances, been little else, than a list of expence,—I had made up my mind to have the business in that quarter wound up with as little delay and expence as possible; and it was in order to despatch my old experienced agent, T. C. for that purpose, that his southern career was put an end to, for the present, at Bathgate, on the same day that I entered Inverness, viz. the 22d of June; two days later, it will be seen, than I had contemplated in my arrangement, but which, will be fully accounted for in my next chapter.\*

\* Previous to entering upon which, it may be necessary, however, for me to notice, the progress of my auctioneer P. C. to the northward, as it will soon be found, that I had occasion to meet him on the day I should have been at Inverness,—and at a place that I had no idea of visiting on my journey out, at least, at the time I entered into that arrangement.—But so far as we were concerned, none of the parties were to blame—and the business will be sufficiently explained in its development.

As I observed before, my west country agent, as I shall still call him, notwithstanding his present mission to the northward, concluded his spring sales, or series of auctions, at *Lanark*, on the 2d of May.—On the 13th to the 16th, I find him, at the *Bridge of Earn* in PERTSHIRE, and *Cupar* in ANGUS,—from the 18th to the 23d, at *Blair Gowrie* in PERTSHIRE, and *Meikle and Glamis* in ANGUS-SHIRE,—from the 25th to the 30th at *Forfar* and *Brechin*, in the latter shire, and *Laurencekirk* in that of KINCARDINE,—and from the 9th to the 20th of June, at *Aberdeen*, where he will be found on my arrival at that place, in the way, and manner, afterwards to be specified.



## CHAPTER XXIV.—1818 (CONTINUED.)

The rider does not always mount, when the saddle is placed on the back of the horse.—I am suddenly prevented from setting out on my northern journey, at the time, and by the route and mode of conveyance I intended.—Go westward next morning.—Sail from Leith on board an Aberdeen vessel, in the afternoon of that day.—No steam boats on the northern passage in those days.—Cheap passage money at the time.—Indication of a coming gale before we leave the harbour.—Accident in the Roads.—Rapid passage down the Firth.—A coarse night.—A calm in the morning.—Strong gale in going into port at Aberdeen in the afternoon.—Get my business in that city despatched.—Arrival at Inverness in time to go to work on the morning of the 22d.—Meet with the Brothers.—Two lions in the way.—My further progress effectually impeded.—Make the best of my untoward situation.—Laborious employment during my short stay at Inverness.—Leave the northern metropolis on the afternoon of the 24th.—Arrive at Aberdeen on the following day.—After finishing my business there, leave it again in the afternoon.—Breakfast at Kinross.—Arrive at Edinburgh in the forenoon, and after transacting business there, land at my own shop door at Dunbar, on the evening of Friday the 26th, being that day se'enight from the time that I left it.—THE JOURNAL OF A WEEK.—Little time for sleep, and less for rest, during its continuance.—Neither of these the matter of my greatest regret.—The ruling passion still predominates.—More instances of its prevalence.—The blasted heath where Macbeth met the witches.—How the spot is pointed out.—My surprise on finding, a living specimen of the reminiscences of former times, still an inhabitant of the Hoar Moor.—How the circumstance may probably be accounted for.

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It has been so often, I believe, remarked, as to become proverbial, that the rider does not always mount, when the saddle is placed on the back of the horse;—so, in my presently contemplated journey to Inverness, notwithstanding that every thing was in readiness, and my preparations completed, for setting out on the morning of Wednesday the 17th of June, in order to take the Highland coach on the day following, (as it then travelled northward only twice a week,) which, barring accidents, would have landed me on the streets of Inverness, on the Friday afternoon, in good time to perform my part of the assignation—there was a certain casualty to come in the way, that put it out of my power, either to mount the vehicle I intended to travel by, at the time I had fixed, or, indeed, to avail myself of that method of travelling

at all, to be any thing near the time I had, myself fixed, for the meeting taking place at Inverness; and who would have thought, that that casualty, would have been a matter that sounds so lightly in people's ears, as a running at the nose.

But so it was, that when the morning of my departure had arrived, I found myself so peculiarly troubled in that respect, above what I had ever felt before, or have experienced since, that there was more than sufficient employment for my hands, with my handkerchief, without allowing them the smallest leisure, for the necessary business, if I meant to travel, of putting on my clothes. Nor, does it appear the matter was much mended by the evening of that day, or, from the anxiety I must have felt to get forward, upon a business of such importance, at the time agreed upon, I would most probably have embraced the opportunity of some of the evening coaches to have got on to Edinburgh, which would, still have been in time, for my overtaking the Highland coach in the morning.

It so happened, however, that my son was to set out on the Thursday morning, to take his passage in a vessel, (the Marchioness of Huntly,) which was to sail on the following day to Aberdeen, where, he was to commence a new, and, as it turned out, a pretty long series of labours again, in the north, with his old fellow traveller, already alluded to as my western agent. I was by no means quite recovered, when he set out, but, it was arranged betwixt us, that, after making enquiry as to the time the vessel was to sail, he was to let me know in the evening; and, if, it was not before I had time to get forward next day, and I continued to get better during the night, I was to go westward and accompany him in the vessel to Aberdeen, which would be so far on the way, and shorten the remainder of the journey forward.

This part of the plan succeeded. I went westward on the Friday, and was on board the vessel an hour or two before she was hauled out of the dock. It was rather a pleasant and settled kind of day when I went on board, and so far was I from dreading any thing in the shape of a storm, at that season of the year, that I had brought with me some maps of the counties we were to pass, in coasting it along, in or-

der to amuse myself with a view of the places, as they successively appeared along the shore, (for it must be recollected, there were no steam-boats, nor steam-boat guides, to the north, in these days,) and indeed, there appeared, at that period of deadly competition, to be little encouragement for any such attempt,—as our fare, including provisions, amounted only to *five shillings*!

Upon hauling out of the dock, however, we had the first indication of a gale, by the whistling of the wind among the cordage; and by the time we had got up our full complement of sail, in the Roads, the vessel took such a lurch to the leeward, that a little horse, or pony, that was expected, in the forenoon when it was put on board, to have stood out the passage in calmness and quietude, on deck, was almost, if not altogether thrown overboard, and had it not been for the check experienced from the halter, which fortunately had not given way, we would likely have been minus that passenger at least, without proceeding farther.

Our run down the Forth was most rapid, distancing considerably, before we turned the East Neuk of Fife, the Atlanta of Montrose, and another Aberdeen vessel, which had sailed with us the same tide; but our situation was far from being comfortable, for, instead of amusing myself with my maps, the great matter was, with my legs firmly set against the companion, or top of the entrance that led down to the cabin, to jamb, or keep myself firmly fixed in my seat on the starboard side of the vessel, while the best and most steady seamen on board, had to cling, or keep hold of something, as their several duties required them to scramble along from one part to the other of the scudding bark. For really, after all, as the master confessed to me, after our arrival at Aberdeen, the Marchioness was a *crank* little vessel, and which, perhaps, I had too good reason to know, before long, although at that time, we were safely landed, with what belonged to us on *terra firma*, not however without a second struggle with the gale—which, although it had fallen off during the night, so as to leave us in almost a becalmed state, on a fine sunny morning of the following day, in sight of, or off Stonehaven,

—returned again with renewed violence as the tide made in the afternoon, and, I observed, afterwards, in the papers, that about the time that we entered the port of Aberdeen, a vessel had one of her masts carried away in making the harbour of Banff.

It may be readily imagined, that after assisting in the arrangements with my son and his partner, whom he had now joined, in respect to their future progress, which we got over by a late hour on the Saturday night, I should lose no time in pushing forward to the place of my final destination, at which I arrived per mail, early on the morning of Monday, the 22d, having been only the intervening Sunday behind my time. And as I am one of those old fashioned folks who do not allow themselves voluntarily to do any business on that day, that can possibly be avoided, and do not even admit of travelling upon business, except in cases of urgent necessity, such as this was, (where the value of many oxen and asses was at stake,) I may indeed, taking all things into consideration, be said to have been very little behind my time, and the brothers, upon the supposition that I had some how or other missed my passage with the coach, instead of complaining, were very much pleased to see me, and we lost no time in proceeding to business on the Monday, after I had lain down a little to refresh myself, upon my arrival in my friend Bennet's,—which, as usual, upon such occasions, had a very sudden, and almost instantaneous effect in restoring me to myself.

But I now found I had another *lion in the way*, as old John Bunyan would have said, to contend with at Inverness, in addition to the one that had already begun to alarm me, by its growlings, before I had advanced beyond the first stage on that side of Aberdeen; and suffice it to say, that with these *two lions*, I soon found my course so completely impeded, that instead of having my wishes gratified in the way I expected, and which, under present circumstances, must have been such a great relief to my spirits,—I was fain to embrace the opportunity of taking the stock off the hands of the one brother, and putting the other in the place in which he formerly stood, in point of management and re-

sponsibility, until we saw, at least, how the business was likely best to be wound up, or if not, what next best was to be done with it.

In putting things to right according to this *new* arrangement, we had a laborious job of it in the wareroom, on the Monday, and Tuesday, reserving our cracks and future projects for discussion in the evenings, when the two brothers usually accompanied me, for the purpose, to my lodgings, after the fatigues of the day. And it was generally time indeed, that then we should also have something to eat and to drink ; for from the time we entered to work in the morning, I do not think we enjoyed any, the smallest leisure, to sit down to a meal of any description in course of the day.

Our unremitting assiduity and attention to the business in which we were engaged, enabled us, however, to do much, in a comparatively small compass of time, so that I was enabled to leave Inverness, but not, alas ! with my pockets filled with bills and cash to the extent perhaps of £1000, as the produce of what I might have disposed of my stock, &c. by the Wednesday's Mail, *via* Aberdeen ; where I had some further directions to leave, after having now ascertained, what I may safely call, the unfortunate result of my journey : which was the more vexatious, as the *two lions*, I have had too much reason to allude to, appeared from quarters whence no such *lions* ought to have come, and consequently, none should have been expected.

The leaving of Inverness at rather a late hour of the day, or after we had partaken of an early dinner, was the occasion of another night's travelling. Breakfasting at Old Meldrum on the following morning ; we arrived at Aberdeen in the forenoon of that day, (Thursday the 25th :) From whence, after giving the necessary instructions to my party in that city, I set out in the afternoon, and after travelling all night again, by the usual route, breakfasting next morning at Kinross, I arrived at Edinburgh, in good time to allow me, to transact some business that I should perhaps have attended to in the going west, if I had had time ; previous to my leaving it for Dunbar by the afternoon coach, which set me down

at my own shop door, on that evening, at the usual time of arrival—and thus concludes

#### THE JOURNAL OF A WEEK.

But such a week! of fatigue and anxiety—of exertion and wakefulness!! Let my readers recollect, that, as I observed before, there were no conveyances by steam in those days, and that the continued jolting, in the night travelling by land, was not more propitious towards my getting a little repose, (for I could never, like some people, enjoy sleep in a coach) than the tossings and tumblings and sickening scenes, on board the smack.

Indeed, I wonder the more how I stood it (for upon the whole I stood the journey wonderfully well) as I find, I had been suffering under a rather severe indisposition, but recently before I set out, and so as to have rendered my services almost unavailable in the shop on our late fair day.

On the night previous to my departure, it is not likely I would sleep long, or very soundly from the anxiety I must have felt on the eve of such a journey. If on board of the smack, on the Friday night, I turned into my bed a little as the gale took off, I must have slept none, or nearly so; for, I recollect well, that I was glad to get upon the deck again to breathe the fresh air in the morning. On the Saturday night I was late up—on the Sunday morning I was early on my way to the place of my ulterior destination—on the night betwixt that and the Monday, I was kept in perpetual motion, until I had just time to lie down for an hour or two, when I had too much to think upon, connected with the business upon which I was about to enter, to allow “kind nature’s sweet restorer, balmy sleep,” to settle down on my eye lids, during that short interval.—From what I have already noticed, I must have been late at work on the Monday and Tuesday, and early at work on the Tuesday and Wednesday.

The Wednesday night being spent in travelling, brought no repose, and that of the Thursday had likely no better result, if we except a little nodding on the road betwixt Arbroath and Dundee, on which occasion, I think, I knocked off my hat by bringing it in contact with the heads of some

of my more sleepy companions, all of which must have made it a very sleepless, as well as a most laborious week.

But all this would have gone as nothing,—had all ended well at the last.—But to make such a finish!—and that finish to be partly, at least, occasioned by two concurrent causes, from which I should have expected better things—could not but affect me as I entered my habitation—Spiritless and crest fallen, on the evening of my return:—indeed I can scarcely repress the rising sigh, if not, the falling tear, when I yet think of it.

It is, however strange, how the ruling passion will still continue to evince itself, even in cases of the most discouraging nature,—and help to bear us up, by the temporary employment it gives to our harassed ideas, even in the midst of circumstances peculiarly distressing.

I have always, since I first became acquainted with the productions of literary men, had a strong predilection to any thing connected with their memory, or for scenes calculated to bring these productions to our remembrance, hence, the same principle operating in me, on my return from my unsuccessful expedition to Inverness, that induced me at a much earlier and happier period of my life, to walk up to, and lay my hand on the door of POPE's villa at Twickenham—and to search out the burial place of the POET OF THE SEASONS, within the walls of the church at Richmond—that made me once glance with eagerness at the mansion of the great SIR ISAAC NEWTON, as I passed it rapidly on the other side of Grantham—and gaze with intensity at the old fashioned fabric which was pointed out to me as the house in which SHAKESPEARE was born, as we stopped to change horses, on an occasion, at Stratford-upon-Avon—that made me pause in one of my excursions to Bunhill Fields burial ground, when I found that I stood before the grave of old JOHN BUNYAN,—and to forget the beautiful altar piece in Crippllegate Church, when I was given to understand, that, that church also contained the ashes of the incomparable MILTON,—that made me forsake the gayer and more exhilarating scenes of the metropolis, on one occasion, in order that I might have an opportunity of exploring the gloomy recesses

of the rambles of HARLEY, and learn among the inmates of Bethlehem Hospital, the justness of the description given of them by the MAN OF FEELING ;—and, in short, that made me embrace with alacrity, the opportunity which once lay in my power to hear one of the admirable discourses of the great and good BISHOP PORTBUS, delivered from his own mouth in the Cathedral of St Pauls—to listen to the plain and unadorned story of old JOHN NEWTON, in his own church of St Swithins,—and led me into the scrape already noticed, when I thought only of putting myself in the way, of hearing DR PALEY, at Carlisle ;—as well as in a number of other instances, which I have neither leisure, nor limits, to enter upon at present.

Hence, I say, the same principle operating in me, notwithstanding the discouraging and depressing circumstances under which I had so recently quitted Inverness, and which, would no doubt engross my reflections too much, to allow me to think of the bloody field of Culloden, till I had passed it,—would not allow me to turn a deaf ear to our northern guard, when, as we whirled across the *blasted heath*, which, as is well known lies betwixt Nairn and Forres, and which, I believe, I was now passing for the first time in day light, he kindly pointed out to me the *clump of trees*, planted, as he informed me, by Mr Brodie of Brodie, to mark the spot *where* Macbeth met the witches.

But this was not the greatest curiosity I was destined to meet with on the *blasted heath*, although it must be confessed, that having so recently retired from the scene of my *blasted hopes* at Inverness, I was far from being in the best possible mood for enjoying such a sight.—For, I do not think that Banquo himself, could have well betrayed more visible marks of astonishment in his countenance, when he exclaimed, as the *weird* sisters intruded themselves upon his vision, and that of his no less astonished companion :—

“ ———— What are these,  
So withered and so wild in their attire,  
That look not like the inhabitants of earth,  
And yet are on it ? ”

than I did, when, as I descended from the coach in order to have the better view, I exclaimed to the guard, “ there is one of them,” on beholding in the immediate vicinity of the



spot where I alighted, standing in the door of her lowly hovel, and busily employed with her rock and her *distaff*, in the exercise of which, she gave a fine display of her shrivelled arms, one of the best living specimens of *the weird sisterhood*, I think, I ever beheld. Nay, I will not even except those inanimate caricatures, so faithfully, if we may believe the engravers, pourtrayed on the halfpenny pictures, and halfpenny picture books, of our juvenile days, of those poor unfortunates, whose greatest misfortune, was the being branded with the *odious*, in those days I may rather say, *murderous*, appellation of *a witch* !

Where the proprietor of the estate, and planter of the clump of trees, had got such a strange piece of the reminiscences of the *olden times*, I know not. But it is possible, that he thought such a piece of *fairy ground*, and associated with such *strange feats of ancient diablerie*, could not be complete in all its parts, without *the resemblance*, at least, of one of its former inhabitants, and on that account, had placed, one of the best modern specimens he could procure, as a kind of *outpost* on the road side, and within view of the trees, as if, to point out the spot where the gambols and revels of her sisters of old were wont to be held and celebrated.

One thing is certain, that if this was the case, the gentleman could not have selected a better specimen, even had he gone to Iceland, or the regions about Mount Etna, for the purpose.

But the thing that most surprised me was, the evident looks of surprise, with which this venerable relic of former times, both in occupation and appearance, (for I will not call her by a worse name) eyed *me*, as I gazed at *her*,—although no doubt, with looks of sufficient astonishment, to have attracted the notice of an ordinary observer. But the ancient dame had not, perhaps, for some time before been exposed to the eye of such a scrutinizing visitant—for really, the unexpected circumstance of meeting such a personification of *THE WITCHES OF FORMER TIMES*, at such a time too, and at such a place, had fairly thrown me off my guard, and made me look, during the short period of my sojourn on the blasted heath, most intensely at her.

Had this venerable personage in reality been, not one of the *weird*, but one of the *second sighted sisterhood*, with which these regions were supposed still to abound,—one of those comparatively harmless beings, who, favoured with the gift of prying into futurity, are nevertheless deprived of the means, either by the power of infernal incantations or otherwise, of contributing in any measure towards bringing the scenes of their predictions to pass. Had this ancient dame, I say, been one of this description, and under the influence of a disposition to exercise her prophetic powers on me, in return for the keen scrutinizing eye with which I had viewed her, given me a significant hint on remounting the vehicle, that I would not soon have occasion to come so far as the *Hoar Moor* (the name by which it is now usually designated) for something to amuse me, and to make a gazing stock of a poor lonely woman, who was glad to occupy her present situation as a piece of bread, for that there was mischief enough brewing for me nearer home.

That, in fact, before the grain that was now bursting into ear, should be ripened unto harvest, I should experience, in the rook, or the roe with which I had first presumed to touch the place of her seclusion, the blasted heath,—a source of such lasting pain, vexation, and uneasiness, as would quickly make me forget all other considerations, and give me, indeed, something to amuse me!—Had this, I say, been my parting valediction, I would most likely have smiled at the time, as I resumed my place again in the vehicle, without any thing apparently being wrong with my *foot* or my *toe*; but, in that case, I most assuredly would not have forgotten her afterwards, for reasons which will be sufficiently obvious in my next chapter. Although, as no such valediction took place, it is not to be expected that I shall there, again, recur to the subject.

## CHAPTER XXV.—1818 (CONTINUED.)

The old Scots saying, “a little *spark*, sometimes *breeds muckle wark*,” in my case unhappily illustrated.—One of *the lions in the way*, I met with at Inverness, is the occasion of a meeting at Ayton.—Go down by the morning coach, and disappointed by the Mail on my return.—Walk up to Renton-Inn on the following morning.—The bad effects of having a *great toe*, pinched by a *small shoe*.—The full extent of my misfortune not immediately apparent.—Able to go about my business for some time afterwards.—Remittances from Inverness, of no great amount.—Instructions to my new agent in that quarter, and to the one recently sent out to wind up the business in Orkney and Caithness.—Auction arrangements.—First general, or quarterly return from my Inverness new agent, but middling.—Caithness and Orkney returns but so and so.—Auction returns from the north, of a very varied description.—Those from Kirkwall fall far short of expectation.—The course I adopted in consequence of so many short comings.—Sale to the trade in Edinburgh of the 3d of September.—Kept open for some time afterwards, by catalogue.—The Sale, notwithstanding every effort, does not turn out well.—Discouraging considerations and prospects.—Get over the 4th of October, but no relaxation in my exertions.—The trumpet sounding again for the winter campaign.—More labourers put into the vineyard.—Former ones encouraged to persevere.—Am obliged to give up my own personal exertions, and retire from my attempt at a sale in Dunbar, in the month of October.—An affecting reminiscence briefly alluded to.—Pitiableness of my situation at that time.—Northern routes continued.—The two *new*, or supernumerary labourers, when, and where, employed.—Inverness proceeds to the 8th December, better than the last, but still little enough.—Those from Orkney and Caithness, up to the 23d very sober.—Another question asked.—Some *flowers* in my path.—Some *thorns*.—Bulletin wanted about my *toe* !

I THINK I took occasion to remark in a preceding chapter, that it is amazing to observe, in the course of Providence, what strange events will sometimes take their rise, from what we would think very disproportionate and inadequate causes, and what I am about to relate, will afford an apt illustration of the old Scots saying, “a little *spark* will sometimes *breed muckle wark*,” as well as the truth of the remark, that, when we meet with any mischief, we do not know, where, or how it will end

One of *the lions in the way* that I met with at Inverness, and which did me, what I considered, considerable injury at the time, required some explanation from Mr ———,

and in order to obtain it, I lost no time after my return, to correspond with that gentleman, on the subject, which correspondence ended, in a meeting betwixt us, at Ayton, on Friday the 31st, or last day of July.

I went down by the Morning Union, with an intention, if possible, to return by the same conveyance in the afternoon; but, the gentleman whom I expected to meet me, being rather long in getting forward, we did not get our business discussed in time, which made me, at a late hour, dependent on the Mail.—When the Mail arrived there was no vacancy, so that I had no alternative, but to rest in Ayton for the night; but, having nothing to do there otherwise, I made up my mind to walk forward to Renton Inn, (where I was in the habit of transacting business with the landlord,) next forenoon, and there wait the arrival of the afternoon coach, to take me forward to Dunbar. This I accomplished, but it unfortunately so happened, that, short as the distance was, my shoes being rather tight, one of them pinched, and, as it afterwards appeared, had somewhat injured MY GREAT TOE. But such a TOE! as it afterwards turned out to me!—I need not however, dwell on it for the present, for enough will be heard of that unfortunate TOE in process of time, as we go along.

Suffice it to say, that I almost yet shudder when I think of the dreadful pain I suffered for such a length of time, from *so small a member*, while the nail was winding (as it afterwards turned out) its way, with slow, but steady progress, for months! into the flesh!—during which time, the only temporary relief I could obtain, was from the caustic, when fresh applied, to eat into the quick; which deadened it for the time being, but only to allow the fell tormentor, to renew its agonizing torments, when it had made its way into the quick again.

It was so far well, however, that the worst consequences of this apparently trifling injury, did not appear at first, for I remember distinctly, being down upon the pier with a carpet shoe on one foot, in the time of our herring fishing, (for there were no steam ships on the London passage in those days, to disturb, these long accustomed annual visitants,) which would most likely be towards the end of August.

Nay more, I was able, I observe, to attend and conduct with a little assistance from some friends, A BOOK SALE, I had, TO THE TRADE, in *Edinburgh*, on the 3d of September following,—and it also appears that I was able to go so far west again on business, (no doubt, with that useful appendage, *my carpet shoe*,) in the month of October ; but, all after that, until it drove me from my personal exertions in the town hall of *Dunbar*, on the — of that month, and indeed, for a long time after, forms a blank in my travelling memorandums.—But before proceeding further, I must return and bring up other matters to that date.

My return from *Inverness*, I see, was accompanied, or followed, by a General Return from my old *Inverness* agent, of no great amount, but, at this, (although I might lament the deficiency,) I could not be much surprised, as there would most probably be some balances with the men, and other matters to settle, in winding up our accounts. Meantime, to make up this deficiency as speedily as possible, my new agent in that quarter was instructed to be as diligent and active as possible for the next three months, or by the time that *his* first general return from that district would be due ;—while, T. C. who had been ordered north for the purpose of winding up the *Orkney* and *Caithness* concerns, at the time he was, on that account, interrupted in his progress, as before noticed at *Bathgate*,—was also advised, to leave no stone unturned, in making that tract as productive as possible, after such a supply of seed had now been lavished upon it, and, at same time, to take every means to put things in the best train towards a final winding up.

My Son William, with his coadjutor and assistant,—it was arranged should break up from *Aberdeen*, on the expiry of the week, on which I saw them, on my return from *Inverness*—which of course, would be about the end of June, and advance to the northward, through *Aberdeenshire* and *Banffshire*,—so as to get across in time, to operate a little in *Caithness*, before the commencement of the great *Kirkwall* annual fair, in August ; where, in consequence of previous reports, we expected something considerable to be done :—after which, it was meant they should return again by *Caithness*, then

cross over to *Banffshire*, and finish their northern campaign in *Aberdeenshire*.

By the first general return of my new Inverness agent, made up to the 16th, it appears, he had done tolerably well as a beginning, but by no means what I should, by this time, have expected from that quarter. But wherever the fault lay, I do not blame him, as I believe, in addition to his known diligence and activity, that the young man was nearly as anxious to make a good remittance, as I was to receive it.

The remittances from my new Orkney and Caithness agent, had also fallen short of my wishes,—I must not now say expectations,—while those from my son and his coadjutor, from the 29th June, when they commenced operations on their new route at Old Meldrum, until they had a sale at Fochabers, to a very small amount, on the 16th and 17th of October, were of a very varied description.\* But, what was the worst feature in *their case*, was, the small amount of the nearly three week's operations, from which so much was anticipated, and to ensure which, so much expence, in sending out so many books, was incurred, at *Kirkwall*, &c. commencing on the 10th of August, and finishing on the 29th.

It was no wonder, that, under these circumstances, or seeing by my occasional correspondence, how things were going, and likely to turn, out in these quarters, I should have had recourse to my TRADE SALE in EDINBURGH, on the 3d of September;—in regard to the propriety of which, I seem to have consulted some of my creditors in the city, in the hopes, that my representation, as to the true state of matters, would induce them, to give me the better lift; in which, considering what bargains were going, I cannot help, yet thinking, they might have served themselves, as well as me.

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\* On this route, I see, I had returns of sales at *Old Meldrum* and *Turriff*, in ABERDEENSHIRE, from the 29th June, to 4th July.—From *Banff*, *Portsoy*, *Cullen*, and *Fochabers*, in BANFFSHIRE, up to the 18th,—and from *Wick*, in CAITHNESS, for the weeks ending the 27th July, and 1st August:—after then, the returns for the weeks ending the 17th, and 24th, and following days to the 29th, are from *Kirkwall* in ORKNEY;—then from *Thurso*, for the weeks ending the 12th and 19th September; and from *Wick* again, for the weeks ending the 26th, and to October 5, in CAITHNESS;—afterwards at *Portsoy*, *Cullen*, *Buckie* and *Fochabers*:—in BANFFSHIRE, from October the 9th to the 17th:—where we will leave them for the present.

It appears, however, that these gentlemen, in general, thought otherwise, or I would not likely have had so much cause to have recourse to the alternative I was afterwards forced to adopt. Indeed, my principal demands appear rather to have been from friends no ways personally interested in the result of the sale, and to give such as these, every inducement, still to come forward and assist me in making up the deficiency, I kept **THE SALE**, on the same terms, open by catalogue for some time longer, and made the circumstance pretty generally known among the trade at a distance.

After all, this sale turned out any thing but productive, and as I had previously fallen short of my expectations in some quarters, and had but *so and so* prospects in regard to others, I was under the necessity, bitter again as the draught was, to make some arrangement in regard to the October payments, now advancing so rapidly upon me, and although at the time, I got the 4th of October over as well as I could have expected, yet I had no intention of relaxing in my efforts.

The trumpet was sounding, now loudly as ever, for exertion—the season for activity in our auctioneering department had arrived—the time of our winter campaign in that department was at hand. What then was to be done, or what did I do? Why, I put more labourers, or made preparations to put more labourers, into the vineyard, and encouraged those who were already in, to persevere in their course, and do what they could, in spite of every sacrifice and obstacle, both by my precept and example.

Example! it may be said, and what example could you give. Have you forgotten **THE SORE TOE**? No, and if I had, the following extract now before me, from a letter which I had written on the 15th September, would remind me of it, “Every thing seems to have gone against me since I saw you last, and confined to the house by this unlucky **TOE**, I can do little more than brood over my misfortunes.” And again, the following extract from the letter of a friend, serves to shew, that at the date of his letter, the 25th October, *the little member* had not only continued to be troublesome, but had become a source of anxiety to him as well as to myself: “I am much concerned to hear by Mr —, that your toe

is still troubling you : I shall be anxious to hear how it is : and you must write me by post how it is." " I really would advise you to be careful of it, as it is a very tender part."

Perhaps Mr —— in passing through Dunbar, had heard something of the alarming surmises and conjectures that were now pretty generally afloat in the neighbourhood, and which made it more necessary than ever for me to go up stairs, and confine myself, in order, had there been no better reason, to be out of the way of *hearing* some of those alarming remarks, which some people were foolish or cruel enough to repeat in my presence, or in my hearing, in the shop !

But notwithstanding all this, I did make the attempt to shew a good example, by commencing a sale personally in the Town-hall, in this place, on —— evening, the —— of October ; BUT IT WOULD NOT DO, and as I was *beat off* that ground on the preceding winter, near the end of the season, by the *interposition of a FEVER*,—so for the present, when just beginning my career, I was, *in consequence of my TOE*, obliged to desist.

Two nights I appear to have stood it out, but on the third, I observe, by the similarity of the trifling produce, to that, on the night in which I had been previously forced to relinquish my task—I *had to give it up*.

Indeed, my case must have been truly pitiable at that time, and a few lines marked at bottom, " Written under very distressing circumstances, October 23, 1818," still in my possession, show, that I must have felt the unhappy situation in which I was placed, MOST KEENLY.

My faithful auctioneers in the north, would, however, require neither precept nor example, to set them busily to work, in breaking up from *Fochabers*, where we left them, on the 17th, and accomplishing, to the full extent, the remainder of their circuit, in a number of selected places, in BANFFSHIRE and ABERDEENSHIRE.\*

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\* The sale at *Fochabers*, as before mentioned, finished on the 17th ;—in *Keith* on the 21st ;—*Huntly* on the 24th ;—*Turriff* the 27th ;—*Banff* and *M'Duff* on the 31st ;—*M'Duff* from Nov. 2, to the 11th ;—*Peterhead* 14th and 21st—do. and *Ellon*, 22d to 26th ;—*Old Aberdeen*, December 1 to 8 ;—*Printfield*, 11, and 12 : after which, I see P. C. had a sale in Glasgow, at the close of the year, say 30th



The proceeds from my Inverness agent, as by his quarterly return, from 16th September to the 8th December, had rather improved a little since the former; but still, little enough, considering all things, and the prodigious sinking of stock, in keeping matters a-going in that quarter—the balance in the wareroom still being, after all I had got back, £1571: 13s. worth, retail value;—which, it will be observed, must amount to a considerable sum, even at the lowest wholesale prices. On the 21st December, I have T. C.'s returns to that date, since the 7th of October, which were also sober enough, considering what had been done to ensure a better result,—which brings matters down, so far as these returns are concerned, to the end of 1818.

But small as the amount of the whole was, when compared with my demands, I may ask myself the question,—What more than I have done, could have been well done with propriety, in the midst of SUCH UPHILL WORK, and in the face of so many obstacles, such as no human prudence could have foreseen, and which, consequently, *could not by any care have been guarded against?*

In the course of November, I had reason to conclude from the correspondence of some dear friends, that my case, severe as it was, was not without much of their sympathy;—which was so far well, as another friend of pretty long standing gave me a very significant hint, in a letter dated the 24th December, not to count upon *his* assistance, in some matters coming round;—and an acquaintance in the way of business, of more modern date, in a letter, of date the 30th, gives me to understand, that “he is under the necessity” of disappointing me, of something, that seems to have been of material im-

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December, to 2d January;—and my son, after having taken up, and continued, the sale, I had to give up in October, on his return, or on the two weeks ending the 19th and 26th December, in *Dunbar*,—seems to have operated somewhere or other, for other five nights, which must have concluded the year,—although the names of the places, are not mentioned in the list before me;—while, of my *new labourers*, I find W. S. & Co. operating in *Edinburgh*, for six nights in October, commencing on the 22d, shortly after I had been laid off from my own personal exertions; eleven nights in the month of November, beginning on the 6th, and ending on the 25th; and on the 23d, 25th, and 26th of December:—and our old acquaintance, who I will here designate as the *Edinburgh Peter*, again at work in that city, from the 23d to the 30th of November; and for 16 nights, at occasional intervals, in the month of December, commencing on the 1st and finishing on the 26th.

portance at the time, in consequence of, a severe disappointment, he had met with that day himself. While, of the same date, I am reminded by the following short extract from the letter of that kind friend, who had already expressed so much solicitude and anxiety on that account, that I had still, in addition to my other troubles, *the little member* to vex me, "I am wearying much to have a bulletin of your TOE."

This information, my friend, I dare say, was not long without, for I appear to have written him at a very early period of the ensuing year, as will be seen in my next chapter.

## CHAPTER XXVI.—1819.

Probable subject of my NEW YEAR'S DAY thoughts.—My walk on that occasion, now become very limited.—Early answer to my friend's letter.—More secret griefs that a stranger may not intermeddle with.—Affecting extracts.—Sorrowful parting with 1818.—Kind wish and signification, of a kind intention.—Annually progressing from bad to worse.—Appalling motto to my new retrospect.—An allusion made to certain poetical lines.—Other matters, of which I am reminded by a perusal of the above retrospect.—Had been then confined for *nearly eleven weeks*, with my sore TOE !—My partner indisposed.—My sheet anchor in the auctioneering department, in consequence, kept at home.—My efforts encrease with my difficulties.—Labourers in the vineyard, and when, and where employed.—Auction routes.—Contrive to keep the publication business moving.—Remittances from the north, &c.—All will not do to avert the coming storm.—Shipwreck of, and loss by the Marchioness of Huntly.—Again had too much leisure to look into matters.—How I, at last, got quit of a troublesome tenant.—An *auld wife's cure*, successfully applied.—Get at the root of the decease.—Directions for the management of the nails, so as to prevent *such* sore toes.—Time when my liberation from this painful thralldom, took place.—Taking down the old kirk —See a *new friend* for the first time, who has never to this day, assumed the semblance of a new face —My relief came too late, to be of much use, in the arduous task in which I was engaged.—Lost opportunities and lost time, now, alas ! never to return.—Discouraging events and distressing considerations —The die is cast.—Give up the contest.—Write my Circular of the 5th of April.—Am able to attend the meeting in Edinburgh, on the 14th, contrary to my expectations at the time I issued my Circular.

As the letter of my friend, in which, he signifies his anxiety to have a bulletin of my TOE, was dated the 30th, it must have

reached me, just in time to become the subject of my thoughts on the New Year's Day. Not in my solitary ramble along the sea shore—not in my long “accustomed walk,” at such returning seasons, by the sea side—this was a luxury I see, that in addition to other privations, I was now forced to relinquish, and to deny myself;—for, if I was reminded by the levelling operations then going on at the church-hill, two years before this, that I was then, unable to extend my walk beyond that contracted limit,—if it was brought to my recollection, by a certain expression in the letter from my northern agent a twelvemonth ago, that I was at that time confined in my operations “within the walls of a house,”—so, on the present occasion, I am put in remembrance, by the expression in my friend's letter, that the limits of my *new year's day walk*, at this period, must have been reduced to still smaller compass, being most likely confined to that small extent of space intervening betwixt my bed and the sofa in an adjoining parlour, and from that sofa, back again to my bed.

A small extent of chain, indeed, for one who had been accustomed to range so largely through the fields of active life, and who had, but so recently, before this tantalizing accident had befallen him, given such a proof of his being fitted for active exertion, IN HIS JOURNEY OF A WEEK!

To return, however, to the subject of my friend's letter,—I find that I had not indeed been long in sending him the desired bulletin, and from the complexion of his answer, my letter, dated the 2d of January, must have contained information respecting other matters, some of them, I doubt not, relating to that description of griefs, that may be communicated to a friend in order to obtain a share of his consolation and sympathy, but which *a stranger may not intermeddle with*!—for it must never be lost sight of, although I have said, and mean to say little on that subject, that *during the whole period embraced in these LATTER STRUGGLES*, I have had a *very fertile* source of secret grief bearing hard, and operating at this time, with a peculiarly depressing effect, upon me.

The extract from my friend's letter, which, I see, is dated on the 7th of January, is to the following purport:—“Yours of the 2d inst. has filled me with much anxious concern about

you,—you have indeed had a sorrowful parting with 1818, I find, in more respects than one; your patience has been put to a severe trial; I trust you have still an ample stock for the time to come.”—And again, “Your affliction is very great—may He who does not willingly afflict, or grieve the children of men, support your mind.”—And “Did circumstances permit, I would come instantly and see you;” concluding, however, by signifying his intention, to do this *still*, at no distant period, *if all was well*.

To him that is afflicted, pity should be shewn from his friend, and the manner in which I have preserved and treasured up this extract, fully evidences the estimation in which I received it at the time, and have since regarded, such a kind and affecting mark of friendly and sympathetic feeling, in the breast of an affectionate ———.

From the different positions in which I found myself placed, at the *three last* returns of the season, as it is styled, I could not but be sensible, that I had, been *annually progressing* from bad to worse in more respects than one;—and that I was fully alive to a sense of my situation at this particular period, I think, cannot be better evidenced, than from, quoting the words of the motto of my next retrospect, which I see like the last, was written on the 17th of the month, (January.)

“Dreadful post of observation  
Darker every hour!”——

A motto, which, like its predecessor, was sufficiently appalling, but no less true, on that account.

I see, that an allusion is not only made in that retrospect, to the few lines formerly briefly alluded to, as written on the 23d of October,—which are, there referred to, as “a poetical effusion written at the impulse of the moment,” and conveying some idea of what I felt at the time; but that, there are several other affecting considerations and circumstances stated, which might otherwise have escaped my memory;—among these, I see, I took occasion to mention, that, at that period, the time of my writing,—I had been “now confined nearly eleven weeks to the house, under the doctor’s hands, with my SORE TOE,”—that “my BEST HELP-MATE, who has always proven herself born for the day of adversity, is also very un-

fit by indisposition, for the fatigues of the shop ;"—and that " my son WILLIAM, my great sheet anchor in the auctioneering department," principally, on that account, was under the necessity, when he should have been elsewhere employed, of remaining at home.

There are a number of other considerations of lamentable import, sufficiently stated or hinted at in that retrospect, but upon which I have no room to dwell. Nor does it much signify, as apart from all these considerations, my situation at this unhappy period, must have been peculiarly pitiable otherwise.

For it is to this day, to me, a dreadful consideration to think, that in addition to all my other troubles, and as an aggravation to my already complicated distresses, I had *then* the mortification of finding that, by that time, I had been confined to the house, by means of so small a member, for nearly *eleven weeks* !—to witness the indisposition of my beloved partner, who had never shrunk from her part of the task in these cheerless and gloomy days of adversity, while health and strength remained to perform it—and to see, in consequence of that indisposition, the useful services of my son put an end to, in the auctioneering line, when, in consequence of some recent discoveries we had made, it appears they were still very much wanted.

But all these, and a number of other distressing matters, I had to endure, and must have been enduring at the time, that my kind and sympathizing friend paid us his proposed visit, which I have no doubt he did, (as where there is a will, there never remains long a want of the means) on or about the 21st, the time he had mentioned.

I by no means would be understood to say, that my friend found me in exactly the situation in which Job found himself, at that painful and humiliating period, when " he took a potsherd to scrape himself withal," and " sat down among the ashes ;" but it is extremely probable, that he would find me reclined on the sofa, either attempting to alleviate the pain which I felt by the application of the caustic, or perhaps to draw off my attention from its excruciating pangs, and prevent me for a while from brooding over my now

greatly accumulated sorrows, by the perusal of some of the *Waverley Novels*, or other light reading of the day, which want of leisure, when I could be otherwise employed, had prevented me from paying much attention to, for some time previously.\*

It was, at any rate, I think, in some such situation, I was found by my new friend, Mr ———, when he called and delivered, some time after, his introductory letter from my old friends, Messrs O. & B. of Edinburgh.

It is not to be inferred, that upon finding the winter almost gone, and the Spring approaching with so little prospect of my being able to avail myself of it to advantage, that I gave myself up to despair. No! My efforts, on the contrary, seem to have increased with my difficulties, and during the early part of the year, and spring months, if I was laid off myself, and my son had lost part of his time, I seem to have endeavoured to make both up, as far as possible, by keeping the wheels of business a-going, as follows: — See below,† No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

\* This may surprise some of my readers, considering the rising reputation at that period, of these multifarious performances, and the noise they have since made in the world,—but it must appear to all who know any thing of my history, that I must have had in general too much to engage my attention otherwise, without novel reading,—but at this time, I had recourse to it occasionally, as a temporary relief from my pain. Is it not rather curious, however, that under the painful circumstances, in which I was situated at this time, I should have observed a flaw, in *ROB ROY*, then I think, just come from press, which I see is now corrected in the edition recently published by Messrs R. Cadell and Co. but which had, through I suppose, all the editions previously published, continued to elude the notice of the publishers, as well as of reviewers of all descriptions; if we except the *Statistical Magazine*, in which, the blunder was pointed out many years ago, but long after I had discovered it.—The passage is that, in which the *fast day*, of the *forenoon*, is so carelessly converted into a *Sunday*, after the interview had taken place at the Bridge, *in the evening*, at Glasgow.

† (1) P. C.'s route after leaving *Glasgow*, where he continued his operations, from the time formerly mentioned, the 2d of January to the 20th, was, by *Port Glasgow*, 26th to the 1st of February;—*Greenock*, from the 4th to the 24th ditto;—*Lochwinnoch*, 26th and 27th;—*Beith*, 1st to 3d of March;—*Dalry*, 4th to 6th;—*Ayr*, 9th to 20th;—*Maybole*, 24th to 27th;—*Girvan*, 29th to 31st;—*Kilmarnock*, 2d and 3d April —

(2) Messrs W. S. & Co. I see, had sales for me in *EDINBURGH*, on the 4th, 5th, 6th, 22d, 25th, and 28th of January; and again on the 15th and 16th of February.

(3) P. C. of that place, had a sale in the same city, on the week beginning 11th, and ending the 16th of January.

(4) We had a sale conducted by Messrs B. & Son, in *Aberdeen*, in February and March:—and

(5) I observe that my son, so soon as we could conveniently spare him, and

While the auctions were going on, I contrived, in midst of all my afflictions and discouragements, to keep the publication business moving in the best manner possible. I had remittances monthly, such as they were, from the Inverness, and Orkney, and Caithness districts, and continued to pick up, by one assistant, the scanty gleanings which the home circuit could still afford.

But all would not do to avert the coming storm, which was preceded by the shipwreck of the *Marchioness of Huntly*, in which I had books to a considerable amount going to my new auctioneer at Aberdeen; and was perhaps rather hastened by a circumstance that I will not even here glance at, being more anxious to heal, than to rip up old sores; for I now plainly saw, that my returns of late, were, or were likely, to turn out to be quite inadequate to meet my demands on the 4th of April, as I had too much leisure to look into matters, when once more set free from the excruciating pain I had so long been accustomed to endure, "within the walls of a house," for I must now mention, what I should perhaps have mentioned sooner, that the pain in my toe, at last, became so exceedingly excruciating, that it could no longer be borne with; and being so long tormented and tantalized to so little purpose, by following the prescriptions of the doctor, (who indeed seems never to have understood the nature of the complaint) and seeing not the smallest prospect of relief, while the swelling continued to baffle every attempt, by the usual method of poulticing, &c. to subdue or reduce it, I was induced to try at last, what I believe I had *stubbornly ob-*

he was able to resume travelling, otherwise, had a pretty extensive tour; beginning at *Dirleton*, in OUR OWN COUNTY, on the 15th February, and finishing at *Almondbury* in BERKSHIRE, on the 3d of April; and which may be delineated as follows.—*Dirleton*, 15th and 16th February;—*Almondbury*, 17th and 18th;—*London*, 19th, 20th;—*Whittingham*, 21st, 22nd;—*Tynningham*, 23rd, 24th;—*Garnkeld*, 1st, 2d March;—*Gifford*, 3d, 4th;—*Pennycuik*, 5th, 6th;—*Ormsiston*, 8th, 9th;—*West Saldon*, 10th;—*East Saldon*, 11th, 12th;—*London*, 13th;—*Inverurie*, 17th, 18th;—*Cochburnspath*, 19th, 20th;—*East Burnes*, 23d;—*Chirnside*, 24th, 25th;—*Hutton*, 26th, 27th;—*Purton*, 29th, 30th;—*Whicour*, 31st and 1st April;—*Almondbury*, April, 3d and 4th.

I see that, independently of my son's having been obliged to remain at home, in so busy a period, by the distressing cause formerly mentioned, he had been disabled from travelling, by a severe cold and hoarseness, the same time after his return from Aberdeen, which fully accounts for his being so long, in again, making the field.

jected to, as "AN AULD WIFE'S CURE;" but such a change!—such a miracle of begun recovery, it soon manifested on my long tormented toe!—that I cannot advance one step further, without appending the recipe, by way of a note, for the use of those it may afterwards concern.\*

*The herb poultice*, so made, was applied to the toe, and in a very short time, the swelling was so much reduced, as to let us see at once the root of the disease, which was neither more nor less, than the nail, not merely, as the saying is, growing into the flesh, but actually taking, a circling direction round the bone and through the toe.

As the poultice, besides laying the swelling, had also considerably deadened the pain, or this might have been perhaps owing to some recent application of the caustic; for the pain without it, was now past endurance. I set to work myself with a pair of scissars, and had actually by applying them in the manner of tweezers or nippers, twisted the nail so much out of its convolutions, as to lay the point bare,—but unfortunately, there were not another pair at hand to cut off the offending substance, and before such could be procured, the pain became so great, that I was obliged to quit my hold, and the snail like form, flew back to its too long established position, with the velocity of a watch spring.

I could proceed no farther at the time, but a fresh application of the herb poultice, soon brought *the little member* into a condition to be operated upon again, and in a few days afterwards, I succeeded in extracting the nail, by the same method of procedure while another stood by, to embrace the opportunity of cutting it off at the proper time, which effectually relieved me from a long, a far too long, so troublesome a tenant.†

\* Take "a handful of *Rue*; a handful of *Maws*; and a handful of *Chamomile*; washed very clean and well boiled, then mash them with a little *Fresh Butter* and *Barley Meal*, finely searched."—This is an exact transcript of the recipe, which, although it is my wish that it may be seldom needed, I certainly do consider of more value in the article of laying swellings, than the price of my whole Book.

† To prevent the nail from again taking a wrong direction and getting into the flesh, I was taught by a book that I procured "on the management of the nails and the feet,"—to scrape the upper part or upmost bend of the nail with a piece of window glass—which, weakening, as it were, *the key stone of the arch*, made the nail less apt to turn in at the sides; and this alone, with the cutting the nails



The exact time when this took place, I do not perfectly recollect, but from the circumstance of my being able to walk so far as the church yard in course of the month of February, at the time when the operations of taking down the *old kirk* were going on ; for it was then, I recollect, that I first saw a *new friend*, who to this day has never assumed the semblance of a *new face*,—the nail must have been extracted before that time.

The relief, however, come when it might, came *too late* to be of much use to me, in the arduous task in which I was yet engaged. The season for activity was now too far gone, and by the time of my perfect recovery, it must have been altogether so, while circumstances, imperious circumstances, did not permit me to wait for another, in which I might attempt to retrieve my fortunes, and make up for lost opportunities :—and I may add, for lost time—now alas ! never to return.

The loss of the Marchioness of Huntly, with the very goods on board, which I was hurrying to their destination, in order to help my deficiencies,—and the poor account of which, I had only ascertained within these few days,—must have been very discouraging, and joined to so many other distressing considerations, could not fail, to shake any resolution I might have formed, or been trying to form, as to farther perseverance in a contest, in which, I had so long fought and bled so profusely, and to so little purpose.

In short, by the beginning of April, the die may be said to have been cast, for on the 5th of that month, I see that I issued my circular, calling, once more, a meeting of my creditors, in the Royal Exchange Coffee House, Edinburgh, on Wednesday the 14th at 12 o'clock:—at which, contrary to my expectations at the time, in consequence of being afflicted with another ailment, I was able to attend personally, and to submit to the gentlemen assembled, the painful document, of which the following abstract, will serve to throw sufficient light on the

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in a square form, or rather a little indented in the middle, something in the form of a heart—is the *sum and substance* of what may be said, in regard to a matter, *so interesting to all, to know.*

subject;—although, I have not room for inserting the several statements to which it refers, and by which it was accompanied at the time.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.—1819 (CONTINUED.)

**Affecting representation.**—Being an abstract of my address, to the meeting at Edinburgh, on the 14th April, 1819, and, including references to the several particular, comprehensive, and minute statements, by which it was accompanied.—General statement of my affairs at that time, as per Inventory, Abstracts, and other documents.

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### ABSTRACT OF ADDRESS, &c.

“WHEN I was obliged by a series of unlooked for reverses, to lay a state of my affairs before my creditors, in the month of September, 1816, my circumstances otherwise, were such, and my future prospects so flattering, that TIME, to me, seemed all that was wanting to enable me to get the better of misfortune.

“And, on looking back to my situation and prospects at that time;—in the possession of a flourishing retail business,—an almost unlimited credit,—and the promising aspect of my publication concern,—I do not hesitate here to repeat, what perhaps some of the gentlemen present, may have heard me already express, that it had been better for me, if I had bound myself down, to pay 24s. per pound, with TIME of my own selecting, (and I would not have been unreasonable,) than to make up 16s. within a period, that has since turned out, so replete with disaster,—and has consequently, obliged me to make such sacrifices of my stock.

“I have, therefore, no reflections to make gentlemen, on the magnitude of the composition then offered.—It was what I considered my stock at the time well able to bear, and therefore did, what I should have conceived it the duty of every honest man to have done in my situation. But, it must be confessed, that I THEN wished, and indeed from a conversation that passed with some of the gentlemen concerned in

the book business, previous to the hour of assembling, fully expected, that **MORE TIME** would have been allowed me, to make good my engagements; yet, from the general feeling manifested at the meeting, and apparent satisfaction expressed at the result, even if I was only able to realize from the funds, three of the instalments, or 12s. per pound,—and my feelings being too much agitated at the time, to enable me to think much of the conversation that had passed,—I readily assented to the terms proposed, and the same day (the 1st of October, 1816,) from which my instalment bills were dated, witnessed the commencement of a series of operations, to put my intentions into execution, that have been continued, I may say, without interruption up to the present day, under disadvantages that, I could not possibly have anticipated, **BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN WITHOUT PRECEDENT IN THE AN-  
NALS OF THE COUNTRY.**

“ For the first three months, gentlemen, as will appear by one of the documents (A) that I shall lay before you, the result was pretty favourable, and in which, I was indeed, almost borne out in my calculations, which, being founded upon the best possible data to go upon, the **DATA OF EXPERIENCE**, and that being taken from the state of sales in the disastrous winter of 1815, I had no reason to think it would deceive me.

“ According to the statement of these sales, attached to my other papers, F, you will at once see, that I had reason to count upon my sales, in bringing my stock into the market, by auction, (the only alternative left me to make a quick return practicable) producing **AT LEAST, ONE HALF RETAIL VALUE**, (which would have been fully sufficient for every purpose,) and had things gone on *as in the first three months*, they would have led to a very different result.

“ By the spring of 1817, however, such an alteration had taken place in the state of the country, that, to use an expression I had then occasion to mention, in submitting my reasons for having a small extension of time from some of my principal creditors, it was “ a time when, charity was upon the stretch in every direction, in order to devise the means of

subsistence for those **VERY CLASSES**, upon whom, I principally depended, as purchasers at my country sales."

"For the time here alluded to, gentlemen, I have only to refer you to that disastrous period, when, instead of having money to spare for **BUYING BOOKS**, the working classes, were glad to earn a scanty pittance, at those numerous public works, set on foot purposely to find them employment;—a period when, to my great mortification, I found my advertisements all over the country, met and opposed in every direction, by others, calling meetings of the inhabitants, to devise some method of employment, in order to keep a great proportion of the people from a state of starvation.

"This, assuredly, was a state of things, the last I should have chosen, for the disposal of a heavy book stock;—but with me the die was cast; and, as if my former calamity, was not of itself sufficient, I had no other alternative but to encounter **THIS** also.

"To the honour of those gentlemen, to whom I made the application, they readily assented to it, and having no idea that such a state of things were to be of **LASTING CONTINUANCE**, and having still very encouraging prospects from one quarter, I proceeded to the experiment of *thirteen months longer*.

"Upon the expiry of that time, I had sufficient leisure, during my convalescence from the effects of a fever, that interrupted and finally put a stop to my personal exertions for the winter, at a book sale in the town hall, Dunbar, ~~which~~, contrary to the advice of friends, (such was my anxiety to go forward,) I had attempted to go on with, in a state of indisposition; I had sufficient leisure, I say, during that convalescence, to bring up a statement of the proceeds of my sales, to the beginning of February, 1818, and to look narrowly into the true state of matters, up to that period,—when the result was such, that I plainly saw that 16s. per pound was now totally out of the question, and that, it was only by having the immediate acquiescence of my principal creditors to a measure I then proposed, with some temporary aid, in order to enable me to save my stock, in case of necessity in future, from some of those friends whose interests

were so much concerned in my getting forward, that I could have any reasonable prospect of making up the 14s.

“For such had been the waste of stock, during these 13 months, that instead of having realized *half* retail value for the articles disposed of, during that time, I had fallen considerably short of *one third*, (as you will see by statement B.)—and in the average of the statements A. and B. comprehending the whole sales since the commencement,—had only been able to average, a trifle more than that proportion,—as appears in C.

“To that part of the proposal, that respected the modification wished, most of the gentlemen had the goodness to agree,—and when an unsuccessful attempt to embrace what I considered a favourable opportunity of disposing of my business in the north, (for which purpose I went personally to Inverness,) and the inadequate result of a sale to the trade in Edinburgh, in order to make up the deficiencies of my summer sales, made another appeal to a few of my friends necessary, I still found I had reasonable gentlemen to deal with,—and having got over the 1st of October, went about my preparations for the winter, (the best season for active exertion in the book trade,) with, I may say, from various causes, sanguine hopes of success.

“What, alas! has since followed, has been a scene of almost uninterrupted calamity and cruel disappointment. Some of the gentlemen here present, will no doubt remember, that in order to conduct the business of my sale in Edinburgh, above alluded to, in person, I had to go west in the beginning of September in a state of lameness. In the beginning of October following, I was still able to undertake the same journey,—but from that time to this, have never been able to repeat the visit.

“Having made my arrangements for an active campaign, during the winter, I commenced my sales in the Town hall, Dunbar, on Monday the —— October. On the third night, at an early hour, as you will see by the small return of that date, (statement D.) I had to give it up in consequence of inability to stand on my foot.

“Since that time to this, I have been rendered almost incapa-

ble of personal exertion, and for a great proportion of it, suffered under a painful confinement, from what at first appeared to be only a slight injury of the great toe, but which, at last, assumed a serious aspect.

“ Compelled by circumstances to keep my sales going forward during that confinement,—and finding my returns falling short of my expectations in one quarter,—I was in the act of sending off a pretty large supply to another, where my prospects were more flattering,—when, I had the mortification to behold, the whole, or almost the whole, destroyed by shipwreck.

“ Yes, gentlemen, I make no hesitation to state, for it would be no longer prudent in me to conceal the extent of the evils by which I have been overwhelmed, that I was one of the unfortunate sufferers by the shipwreck of the *Marchioness of Huntly*.—I had books on board, to nearly the amount of L.200, retail value; by which, and a small loss in the preceding winter, I may be said to have sustained a loss of stock, to the amount of about L.100 by sea.

“ But this was not the utmost extent of my misfortune by the loss of the *Marchioness*, for the goods not going forward, may be considered as having interrupted a course of sales, from proceeding timeously, by which, I expected in the month of February and March, to have raised at least L.200,—while my son, from whose exertions I counted much during my confinement, by being also laid up with a severe cold and hoarseness after his return from Aberdeen, in a most important part of the season, may account for short comings to nearly the amount of L.200 more,—while my falling short of L.100 more AT LEAST, in consequence of my not being able to look sufficiently after some of my auxiliaries, whose operations became extremely languid during my confinement,—and the circumstance of a number of goods being accidentally detained for a long time in their passage, to a quarter where they were much wanted, may be considered, as sufficiently accounting for those short comings, which left me so utterly unprepared for the bills that became due on the 4th of April.

“ Under these circumstances, I had no alternative, but to have recourse to the measure I have adopted, and although I may be said to have been forced to it by the necessity of the mo-

ment, a perusal of the various statements, A. B. C. D. and E, must convince you all, gentlemen, that it was full time.

“ If I have, however, failed in my attempts to do the most for my former creditors, and to extricate myself, from the difficulties of the unhappy situation, in which the long-continued depressed state of the times had placed me, a perusal of the accompanying documents must convince you, that nothing has been wanting on my part. There is no corner within the bounds of a Scottish license, where we thought our efforts would prove effectual, but has been tried. From the borders of England, to the islands of Sanda and Westra, in Orkney, have been witnessed our exertions, in one shape or other, and if we have not succeeded, by obstacles unforeseen, and confessedly never experienced before (as I am prepared to shew) by those long conversant in the auctioneering line, I trust the will, will be, so far accepted for the deed.

“ For myself, I have done much, and suffered much,—but this is not all.—The whole of the available members of my family, have been employed during the arduous conflict in one shape or other,—they have submitted to sacrifices and privations, as well as myself, while hope remained—now it is gone, we are all at your mercy.

“ After this statement, in which, I trust, I have accounted in the most clear and satisfactory manner, both for the short comings that more immediately led to my giving up the contest, at the time I did, as well as for losses to such an enormous amount, as you will perceive, by attending to the average statement at the bottom of E. I shall not take up your time, gentlemen, by calling your attention to those of lesser importance :—Those losses alone, with what I experienced by sea, and more than L.300 of former debts which have turned out bad, or have, at present, the appearance of being little better, are, with the necessary deduction, from my present stock, to make it marketable in such times, fully sufficient to cover the present deficiency in my funds, as you will observe in the general statement.

“ I write this under the impression, that, from this protracted indisposition, I may not be able to appear personally at the meeting, and have therefore, been as plain and explicit as possible.

“ The statements to be exhibited, will shew you the rest, and I trust too much to the gentlemen present, most of whom have been long acquainted with me in the way of business, to imagine, that, I shall suffer by my absence, especially, as I shall be ready on all occasions, to give any further explanation that shall be deemed necessary.

“ If the matter can be immediately adjusted, it certainly will be of infinite importance to the interests of my family, as giving us the only chance to preserve unimpaired our retail business ; and actuated by this feeling, I am induced to make offer of the following terms of composition, which, a comparison of the nature of the stock, with the state of the times, I trust, will convince you all, are reasonable.

*Here follows the offer, with some particular reasons upon which it is founded ; but as a matter of private concern, or what only concerned those interested in it at the time, I shall not here dwell on.*—The general statement, however, here subjoined, will afford some idea of what these terms were, or ought to have been.

**GENERAL STATEMENT** of my affairs, on the 14th April, 1819, as per inventory, abstract, &c. amounting to 39 pages folio, in which, every thing was distinctly and minutely specified :—



Amount of debts due by G. M. as per  
statements, - - - £6100 7 0

Amount of funds as per do. £3553 12 11½

Losses sustained by  
G. M. since 1816,  
Say losses by sales,  
as per documents  
A. B. C. D. & E. 1699 18 4

Do. by sea, 100 1 8

Bad debts out of  
£1300, formerly  
accounted for as  
good, - 300 0 0

Deduct one third  
from £1800 of  
present stock, to  
make it market-  
able, - 600 0 0 2700 0 0

Which, added to stock, and funds presently  
considered available, although requiring  
a considerable time, to realize the greater  
part of, will make - - - £6253 12 11½

being upwards of One Hundred and Fifty Pounds over  
what would have been necessary, had no such losses and  
draw backs otherwise, have taken place ;—which sufficiently  
shews, that, had it not been for these disastrous results, we  
would have been in the way of rather making something over  
*tear and wear, rent, taxes and family expenditure*, than fall-  
ing short to such a lamentable extent.

But, so it appears to have been again decreed, that ALL SHOULD  
go—that all our labour and exertions, so far, should be once  
more swept away, by the irresistible impulse of those protracted  
misfortunes, which made it again necessary, that we should  
seek shelter, in so humiliating an arrangement.\*

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\* Whatever these terms, however, were, it appears that my good friends on  
this occasion, were rather disposed to befriend me, than otherwise; for the following  
*Notandum*, which I observe, is added to my own statements, viz. “*In addition  
to these losses stated by Mr M. a considerable deduction, was judged necessary  
by the gentlemen connected with the Book trade, present at the meeting, upon  
examining the Inventory;*” which, I presume, refers to the item of £600, deduct-  
ed as above, from £1800 present stock, to make it marketable, which evidences,  
that this item was not of my fixing, or, at least, was considered highly reasonable,  
although, could I have foreseen what was still to follow, I might have considered  
it all little enough.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.—1819 (CONTINUED.)

Pitiable as our situation, or condition in life, may be at any particular period, yet it is possible to conceive a case still more pitiable.—A most striking illustration of the truth of this remark, on the day, on which my meeting took place at Edinburgh.—I am able to go west, contrary to expectation.—My new trouble not supposed to have been long a stranger to me.—Mine, not the only affecting, or most tragical occurrence of that day.—An execution of a poor young unfortunate.—Meet with, and lay my affecting representation, with its accompanying documents, before my creditors.—Every thing adjusted according to, or, beyond my most sanguine wishes.—Leave Edinburgh on the 14th, with very different sensations, from those I entered it with, on the day before.—Melancholy thoughts, will still intrude themselves.—Chiefly occasioned by the old complaint, of not having done so much as I could have wished.—Get over present difficulties.—Congratulations and kind offers of service, pour in from all quarters.—A few specimens.—Get into better spirits.—A short pleasure tour, or, rather tour of health.—Accompany two friends on a visit to the Rumbling Bridge.—Need all my stock of health and renovated spirits, and patience too, on my return.—One good effect of the April settlement.—Winter campaign commences at Berwick.—My northernmost agent similarly employed in Orkney and Caithness.—Sales in November and December, by a new auctioneer, in Dundee and Perth.—Home circuit routes to the end of the year.—Remittances continue to arrive regularly from my northern agents.—A visible falling off, however, soon becomes more and more apparent.—One comfort in the midst of falling off remittances.—Another.—Reasons for being so particular, in my past details.—Must now confine myself to more circumscribed limits,—&c.

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I HAVE often had occasion to observe, in the progress of my journey through life, that, bad as our condition may at times be, yet it is possible that it might have been worse; and, pitiable as the situation to which we may have been reduced at any particular period, yet, it is possible to conceive a case still more pitiable.

This observation, which must have struck many a one besides me, was most strikingly illustrated, on the day, I attended the meeting at Edinburgh.

I have already noticed, at the end of the chapter preceding the last, that I was able to go west, contrary to my expectations in consequence of the occurrence of another ailment, and that ailment, from the circumstance of my being obliged

to have recourse to a coach to carry me from my lodgings, in the house of a friend, (where, accompanied by my faithful companion in joy and in sorrow, I had arrived the day before,) to the place of meeting in the Royal Exchange, spiritless and disconsolate, with my head bound up,—I am inclined to think, was of the same description, if not the commencement of that series of rheumatic affections in the head, which has so often laid me up, during the winter and spring months since—has now left me almost toothless—and of which, I have had more than a *double quantum*, during the currency of the year, I have been busied in preparing these pages for the press; so that, I write this with my head still bandaged up, after the lapse, since I was seized with this second attack within the year, of, *more than ten months* ;—and this circumstance, of the likelihood of my not being able to attend personally, it will also be observed, is alluded to, in the abstract of what I then laid before the meeting, in my last chapter.

But, however pitiable *my* situation was,—and however depressing, from various considerations, must have been my thoughts, as the coach approached the entry to the Exchange,—I was speedily reminded, when the vehicle stopped at that entry, that mine, was not the only, or most, tragical occurrence of that day, by the assembled crowds a little farther up the High street, either taking their places to witness the execution of the unhappy young man, who, on that day, had been doomed to expiate the crime of having abstracted money from letters in the post-office, by the sacrifice of his life—or, perhaps, if the hour of execution had been previously altered to eight in the morning, which I think was the case, the crowds might still be continuing to gaze at the removal of the scaffolding, or other operations connected with, or following said execution.

Be this as it may, low as I was brought that day, and humiliating and pitiable as was the situation in which I was about to be placed, I had this dreadful memento sounded in my ears, just before I entered the place of assembly, that a more pitiable, a more deplorable case still, had just been, or was about to be, exhibited, in our immediate vicinity.

I need scarcely add, that after having laid my affecting representation before the meeting, accompanied by its several luminous statements, (which I had taken care, under the idea of my probable absence, to render peculiarly so) and other satisfactory documents, I found them disposed to grant me every indulgence; and, in fact, the matter may be said to have been adjusted, fully up to my most ardent wishes, and to the utmost extent of my most sanguine expectations:—and it may easily be conjectured, that, upon the breaking up of the meeting, I lost no time in conveying the pleasing intelligence to my wife, who, from what she once witnessed on a former occasion, when I was far better able, and at home, in my own house, to stand the buffets of fortune, than on the present, had, as I observed before, accompanied me to Edinburgh, and must have felt extremely anxious to know the result.

The sensations with which I left Edinburgh on the Wednesday afternoon, must have been very different, in various respects, from those under which I entered it on the day before;—yet, I am certain, that, from the train of thought I had been indulging in during our journey homewards, notwithstanding all the cheering arguments, either of my fellow travellers could use, a melancholy gloom must have been spreading itself over my countenance, and have had a visible effect by the time we reached home.—And what, may my readers think, was the cause of all this? Not surely any compunctious visitations I might have felt on the supposition that I had been remiss, or indolent, in the execution of my duty; for, the whole tenor of my statements, and their accompanying documents, which I had just been exhibiting, go to show that I had nothing to reproach myself with of that kind. Nor could it arise from any consciousness that, in the execution of my arduous task, I had been guilty of what too often neutralizes the efforts of the utmost industry, viz. been too lavish, or profuse in my expenditure, in bringing so many articles to market;—no, the making all the available members of my own family, and myself among the rest, take such an active part in the business, must put an end to any surmise of that kind.

The fact was, that my present depressed spirits, (disguise it as I might,) must have just been the recurrence of a former ailment—the same complaint, that my good friend attempted to cure me of, in his letter of ———, 1816, but which, had now returned upon me with redoubled force,—when I found, my affairs in a doubly worse state, than I had found them, at that former unhappy period of my life.

I had no reason to reflect upon my want of zeal,—or the want of exertion,—or the want of economy—in carrying my exertions into execution ; but I could not endure, in patience, the cutting reflection, that, notwithstanding all that zeal—those exertions,—and the privations and discomforts so many of the members of my family had been obliged to submit to—indeed, did willingly submit to—in order to produce a very different result,—all had been to so little purpose;—that I had, notwithstanding, been unable, to make a better finish for those kind friends, who had just treated me with so much tenderness,—but who must now, to all appearance, be sufferers to an extent, I could not, at a very short time previously, possibly have contemplated.

The course of time, however, soon brought with it so many flattering and congratulatory epistles, that I was enabled once more to get up my spirits, and to set about the preparations for my new arranged task, with earnestness and alacrity ; and it was well for me that it was so, for *six* months would soon be got over, and having a *third* part of my payments to make in that period, I had still much to do in the first six months. I must have considered myself, therefore, under peculiar obligations to those good friends, who were so ready to pour in the balm of consolation, and to put me in spirits.

One dear, and much esteemed friend, of date the 7th May, feelingly writes me—“ It gives me much pleasure to know, that you have got matters settled so much to your satisfaction, and that now, you will in some measure, be delivered from mental anxiety, that your other troubles will also speedily leave you.” Another, with whom I had long had very extensive dealings, and who certainly acted a very friendly part on the present occasion, went so far as to say, in his letter now before me, of the 18th, “ I wish to see you

at the top of your profession," and for that purpose not only made offer of, but an actual tender of his service, on a pretty extensive scale, in the particular line in which he was engaged;—while, even Mr ———, to whom I considered it advisable to give a hint, in consequence of some expression of his having come to my ears, which I considered calculated to alarm my securities, is pleased to express himself to me in the following terms, in a letter dated the 24th of May, accompanying an invoice to a considerable amount:—"I do certainly, at this time, consider your funds equal to all your engagements,"—which, while it evidences that he might have had some lurking suspicions formerly, that I had, in reality, attempted to do too much, goes to shew, that *now*, he was perfectly satisfied, I had done no such thing.

And as an evidence that I had so far recovered my spirits, notwithstanding some rather vexatious circumstances which continued to annoy and harass me towards the end of May, in the month of June, and beginning of July. By the — of the latter month, I see, I had been able to accept of the kind invitation of a friend, who lived not far from the curiosities of the DEVON, to pay him a visit, when I had an opportunity of accompanying him and another friend, out also, like myself, on a tour of health, (a thing I assuredly stood much in need of, after so much painful trouble, and so many severe and arduous conflicts,) on a jaunt to the RUMBLING BRIDGE, on which occasion, I think, we left Mr Young, the landlord of the inn, a small memorandum, by way of a friendly admonition, in the album, at that time, kept in his house.

On this short excursion, I had also an opportunity of seeing Castle Campbell, *alias* Castle Gloom, with its glen of *care*, and burn of *sorrow*;—with other places worth noting, in the neighbourhood of the town of *darkness*, where, now stands the modern DOLLAR.

It was well that I had been at last enabled to take, what had been so long considered a *desideratum* by my best friends, "a short pleasure (not business) tour," for the recovery of my health and spirits;—for, from certain reminiscences still floating on my memory, and otherwise upon record, I think I would have need of it all, and a good stock of pa-

tience besides, in the subsequent months of the year, after my return.

In the mean time, there was one good effect that arose from my April settlement. By being allowed, more time, to dispose of the remainder of my stock, I was the better enabled, to husband my resources, by selecting the **BEST** auctioneers, and **BEST** times for auctions. Hence, as the season most adapted for the auction winter campaign drew near, it appears that I was not remiss in my preparations; and as I now wished to see what the good town of *Berwick-upon-Tweed* would produce, I find, by an advertisement before me, that my son commenced his operations for the season, in that place, on the evening of Monday, 30th August,—thus taking the season by the end, and following it out, in such places, and at such times, as we found it convenient to employ him afterwards.

While T. C., being on the spot, was commissioned to embrace the opportunity of the approaching *Kirkwall* Fair, to do what *he could* on that occasion, as well as to employ, the leisure time he could save from the other concern, in other places of his district.\*

Meantime, remittances continued to come in from my *Inverness* agent, with his wonted regularity, during the remainder of the year; and although there is a visible falling off of the amount latterly, or, in the returns up to the 17th of August and 9th of November, yet I had no reason to impute this to want of zeal or activity on the part of the new agent; and there was one comfort, that while my golden

\* I accordingly find that the young man, had sales by auction, and by private bargain, at *Kirkwall*, in the two weeks, ending the 21st and 28th of August, being the time which the fair lasted; again at same place, on the week ending the 6th of November.—At *Stromness*, on the week ending the 13th,—and at *Wick* in *CAITHNESS*, on the 29th and 30th same month, and 1st, 2d and 3d of Dec.

In the month of October, I appear to have had a sale in *Dundar*, and another at same place, (for one week only and intimated to be the last for the season,) commencing on Monday, the 6th of December;—and towards the end of Nov. and in the month of December, I appear to have had a series of sales, under the management of a new auctioneer in *Dundee*, and latterly in *Perth*, from whence, the books were returned on the 4th of Jan.—Where my son went to, after breaking up at *Berwick*, I have no record before me, but, I see a round by *Tynningham*, December, 13 and 14;—*Whittingham*, 15;—*Linton*, 16, 17 and 18;—*North Berwick*, 20 and 21;—*Dirlston*, 22 and 23;—*Atholstaneford*, 24, 25;—*Innerwick*, 27;—*East Barns*, 28;—and 1 night at *West Barns*,—which he most likely conducted:—bringing up our auction operations, to the end of the year.

harvest from that long-promising, but slow-in-performing, quarter, was now disappearing more and more in the distance, till it had almost totally vanished from my sight,—the amount of stock was also considerably brought down, by the number of returns I had recently received ; and one greater comfort still, was, that if money did not now come so plentifully in, my payments and present outlays, were also considerably reduced, and did not press so heavily upon me.

My other agent, at same time, seems to have been indefatigable in his exertions in winding up matters farther to the northward ; for his monthly remittances, although small, seem to have been *most regular*, not one month appearing to have been missed, from the return formerly noticed ; and as it has always been my delight to record the good conduct of my agents, when it has appeared praiseworthy, I may be the more readily excused for bearing this testimony to the exertions of these two young men, at so important and highly interesting a juncture.

I have been thus particular, so far, in detailing the events of the *FIVE* preceding years,—as embracing a period, replete with the most striking developement of the vicissitude of mundane affairs, and the sudden transition, from the almost opposite extremes in the chequered drama of human existence—that of prosperity and happiness, with apparently very little alloy—and its antipodes,—a state of continued and protracted adversity and mental suffering, which human nature, almost shudders to contemplate.

Whatever events now remain to be taken into consideration, must, in accordance with my limits, be brought into smaller compass ; and this is of the less consequence, as whatever *ups* and *downs*, I have afterwards experienced—whatever *hopes* and *fears* may have subsequently arisen in—and whatever *comforts* or disappointments may since have crossed—my path,—the *Greatest Battle*, the *most tremendous conflicts* will be found to have originated in my great misfortune of 1816,—and that all other matters taking their rise from, or brought into operation through, that misfortune, must be considered, severe as they may be, as of inferior importance, and need not therefore be so fully handled.



## CHAPTER XXIX.—1820.

Comparatively happy state in which I entered the year 1820.—Have still an arduous task to perform.—No time for me yet to think of ease.—New auction routes.—Matters do not yet get better in the north.—Choice flowers of timely appearance.—Preparations for winding up the Orkney and Caithness concerns.—Things still continue to move, in a languid way in the other northern district.—Mournful consideration.—Again take *TIME* by the forelock.—Wholesale sale to the Trade.—Cheap sale by catalogue, to the public.—Early commencement of our winter auction campaign.—Sale at Kirkwall fair, and at Stromness, in Orkney.—Our most northerly agent ordered home, after winding up, &c.—Matters put in a train for winding up the other northern district also.—Receive my *last* general return, from my old Inverness agent.—First remittances from my new *winding up* agents.—Monthly remittances miserably decrease.—Necessity of persevering in the meantime.—Winter auction routes.—Sales in Edinburgh.—Wheels still kept in motion.—My Orkney and Caithness agent arrives from the north.—Auction sales in the home circuits.—Remittances from the north, continue to dwindle away.—Northern agent again despatched to the north, to hasten the winding up, in that quarter.—One mischief generates another.—My new Aberdeen adventure, in order to supply deficiencies.

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I must have entered the year 1820 with very different sensations from what I had been accustomed to for some time, on my new-year anniversaries; and if I was able, on this occasion, (which I have no doubt I was,) to indulge myself with my solitary walk, it would likely be, in something of that tranquil mode, in which I used to sally forth to those early communings, before these afflicting and overwhelming disasters, that have occasioned so much dreadful struggling since, had overtaken me.

For the last three or four years, indeed, my mind must have been in too perturbed a state for calm reflection at these returning seasons,—and at the time I wrote my *Annual Retrospect*, soon after the commencement of the preceding year, it must have been peculiarly so. “Dreadful post of observation, darker every hour,” was truly a dreadful motto,—but not more dreadful than just, at the time, as my readers must now be abundantly satisfied. But, on this occasion, all was

comparative sunshine; and if, as I observed before, I indulged myself in my walk by the sea side, I might have observed on the unstable element, a true picture of what man's life is, in general, and what my own had so recently been.

By the time I came to pen my next Retrospect, indeed, which I see was on the 23d of the month, I seem to have been quite alive to the happy change that had taken place in regard to my feelings and prospects; for I not only had selected as a motto to that Retrospect, one breathing a very different spirit indeed, from the former, but, in course of my writing, had given expression, to such aspirations of gratitude to the Giver of all good, as must ever go to shew, that I was far, very far indeed, from being insensible of the great alteration which had taken place during the lapse of the last twelve months,—both in regard to my future prospects, and present circumstances.

But I still had an arduous, and, as it afterwards turned out, a protracted task to perform,—so that, it was no time for me yet to be saying, “Soul, take thine ease.” I had, it is true, got over my first instalment in the beginning of November, but I had another to provide for, early in the ensuing May, and the season for auctioning, as the days lengthened, would necessarily pass away; I therefore extended my son's route, from the place we last left him, or rather where he concluded his sales at the end of the year,—from the 5th January, when he recommenced at *Pencaitland*, and continued through various places in EAST LOTHIAN and BERWICKSHIRE, until he finished his round at *Greenlaw*, on the 1st of April;\* and, in the meantime, it is probable, although his returns, at present, are not before me, that my new auction-

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\* This route comprehended *Pencaitland*, 5th and 6th January,—*West Salton*, 7th and 8th,—*East Salton*, 10th, 11th,—*Gifford*, 12th, 13th,—*Garvald*, 14th, 15th,—*Whittingham*, 19th, 20th,—*Stenton*, 21st, 22d,—*Cockburnspath*, 27th, 28th,—after which we find him at *Dunse*, from 31st Jan. to the 5th Feb.—*Chirnside*, on the 7th and 8th—*Auchincraw*, 9th, 10th,—*Allanton*, 11th,—*Hutton*, 14th, 15th,—*Paxton*, 16th, 17th,—*Whitsome*, 18th, 19th,—*Litholm*, 21st, 22d,—*Eccles*, 23d, 24th,—*Ednam*, 25th, 26th,—*Yetholm*, 28th,—*Morbathle*, 1st and 2d March,—*Denham*, 3d, 4th,—*Denham*, &c. 6th, 7th,—*Ancrum*, 8th, 9th,—*St Boswells*, 10th, 11th,—*Gallashiels* and *Melrose*, 13th to 18th,—*Lauder*, 20th to 25th,—*Smallholm*, 28th,—*West Gordon*, 29th, 30th,—*Greenlaw*, 31st and 1st April.

eer, on the receipt of his quota of books from *Perth*, would commence and carry on operations for some time in *Edinburgh*—and this, no doubt, would be the more necessary, as, in addition to the continued depression of the times, I see the *bad weather* had been much against our sales in the country.

Of date, the 12th, I see I have a remittance from my Orkney and Caithness agent, with an account of expenses for the fifty-five weeks from the 19th December, 1818, to 8th of January current, amounting to what I could not help denominating, “a tremendous sum indeed, for such remittances,” although, as before, I made not the smallest reflection against the present acting agent, who I still believed, was as anxious as I was, to get the concern wound up.

The amount, however, where so little had been done, was sufficiently discouraging ; and the matter was not much mended by the receipt of my Inverness agent's return, up to the 31st,—by which it appeared that the expense, in that quarter, was also large enough for its produce, and the falling off, more than I could have wished for some time to come ; although, I must here say also, no blame whatever seemed to be imputed to the present agent.

It was so far consolatory, however, that in midst of these fresh discouragements, or I should have said, continuation of former discouragements, I had not only the testimony of my own conscience to support me in my endeavours,—but that of an old friend, who had, on many occasions, proved himself friendly, and who so early in the year as the 7th of the month of January, concludes a letter he had written me, most likely in answer to one of thanks from myself, as follows :—

“ If I have succeeded in my sincere intentions to serve you, I have amply my reward. May the great Disposer of events, bestow upon you and yours, that prosperity and happiness which your great exertions and excellent principles so well merit, is the sincere prayer of your faithful friend,” &c.

It is pleasing, indeed, to meet with these choice flowers occasionally, in the journey of life ; and this *one* would appear the more opportunely, to encourage me to bear up in the contest ; as I rather think, from a circumstance I am about to mention, that I must have had some pretty hard pulling

against the stream, to make up my second instalment, on the 4th May, the time specified in the bills. \*

In my correspondence with my Orkney and Caithness agent, about this time, he sent me sundry pieces of information, necessary for me to know, before sending him final instructions in regard to a plan, that I wished him to adopt, in winding up that *ill fated* part of the concern ; and in a letter I wrote him of the 25th March, I see, I allude to some "printed notices," I had forwarded, by the *Rose*, to assist him in carrying that plan into effect : which had for its object, the bringing "the business IN THIS, AND THE TWO NEXT DELIVERIES, into the smallest possible compass."

And, of the 25th of April, I have my Inverness agent's *general return* up to that date, by which it appears, that things still continued with him to move on in a languid way ; but by which time, he had succeeded, by means of returns, &c. to bring down the amount of stock considerably in that quarter, which must have been a further relief to my mind, after having so much stock so long locked up, to so little purpose.

Ah ! little, however, did I think at the time, *how little*, the *five hundred and thirteen pounds odds* yet remaining, were destined to produce !—and the number of, *imperfect sets* and *imperfect books*, I was, in consequence, to be forced to bring into the market, at prices, so disproportionate to my last estimate,—even with all the allowances so generously made upon it !

If I had met with some difficulties, or more uphill work than I had contemplated, in providing for my *second*, it would appear I was determined, to take *time* once more by the forelock, in the matter of providing for the *third* instalment ; although the period betwixt these two, was now extended to nine months—or so, as the latter did not fall due till the 4th January next.

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\* That circumstance, is shortly as follows,—in addition to my other sales by auction, I had been under the necessity of commissioning my most northerly agent, in the midst of his other labours, to have a sale at *St Margaret's Hope*, in Orkney, on the 15th, 16th and 17th of March ; and another at *Stromness* on the 3d, 4th, 5th and 6th, of April,—all of which must have been found requisite, in order to help me, to make up for lost time by bad weather, &c. in this more southern district ; preparatory to the heavy payments coming round in May.

But all, will be found to have been little enough by that time, when it did come round, notwithstanding I commenced my preparatory operations, so early as the month of May, by a *wholesale SALE TO THE TRADE*; at which, some of my good friends in the line, in order, to help me away, with this still unmanageable stock, purchased considerably.

This was followed up by a sale to the PUBLIC, at Dunbar, by means of a catalogue, under the head of "*CHEAP SALE OF BOOKS, &c. commencing this day, June 12, 1820, for ready money, and to continue for such Books as are unsold, for a limited time only.*" This catalogue, consisting of 24 pages octavo, contained considerable variety, and some of the articles put in at exceedingly low prices, but although the books continued on sale to the 29th of July, at the place mentioned, and many of the catalogues were sent out with accompanying circulars to the neighbourhood, the produce of the sale was not to a very great extent; but this is the less to be wondered at, considering, that matters had been of late, rather overdone *that way*, in the good little town, as I must still continue to call it.

Nothing, however discouraged, by that circumstance, or rather, stimulated to new exertions by my want of success, the sale was removed to *Haddington*, to commence in the Town-hall there, on the 2d of August, and subsequently, after continuing at Haddington to the —, was removed to *Berwick*;—where, our itinerating sales for the winter, may be said to have commenced with that sale, so early as the 28th of the month.

In the meanwhile, my Orkney and Caithness agent, was ordered to make one trial more at *Kirkwall fair*,—and another, at *Stromness*, before his return,—which he did at the former place on the 18th, 19th, 21st, 22d, 23d, and 24th August,—and at the latter, on the 31st, the last day of that month, and 1st, 2d, and 3d of September. After this he was desired to lose no time in returning homewards, making the best possible finish with subscribers he could, and leaving the numbers for those who had not completed their works, in the hands of two respectable merchants, who had been recommended to me for the purpose; the one at Wick, the other at Kirkwall:—so that, those subscribers had themselves to blame, who had

not, to that time, completed their publications, or embraced the opportunity still offered them, to do so afterwards. I accordingly find, that this young man, in his route homewards, missed a letter that I had written to him, on the 12th of September, being then on his way,—which would bring him here betwixt, and the end of the month.

With my other, or Inverness agent, I could not bring things to so speedy an issue; but previously to adjusting with him, I see I had got, so far back as the 24th and 26th of May, two sheets of returns, stating distinctly, how subscribers stood all over his extensive district, with other information highly useful and necessary for my government.

This was all exceedingly proper, and so far as it went, very satisfactory, and it is the more a pity that, at this particular period, I should have had any thing to distract my attention, from considerations, which so peculiarly demanded my *utmost* attention at so critical a period, without the intervention of *something worse than the toothache*, as I see I had occasion to remark, to *torment me*;\* for it appears, by a letter that I wrote my agent early in June, that he had assigned some reason for not undertaking, the winding up the *whole* of his circuit, which made it necessary to employ some others in the business, which I did afterwards, in the persons of two of our oldest, and what we had been led to consider, our steadiest hands, and the thing that I had reason to regret most afterwards, was, that at the time our new engagements with these men were completed, any thing should have occurred to prevent my having *all my eyes and wits too*, bent towards these matters at the time.

But where *misfortunes*, and *more misfortunes*, are, it may be remarked, in store, there will be no want of the means of bringing them out—and all the reflection I now make is, that if I had had less otherwise to engage my mind at that particular period, I might have been better able to have guarded

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\* This alludes to a remark, I had occasion to make in a letter to my Inverness agent, in answer to his of the 18th July, in which, I mention that I had had a severe touch of the toothache,—alas! with what an afflicting circumstance is that recollection associated,—a circumstance which makes my *heart*, not my *tooth*, ache to this day, when I think of it; and to which, the torture of the toothache, with all its agonizing pangs, bore not the smallest comparison.

against some future contingencies, which I found, in time, had not been sufficiently foreseen, or provided for.

Of date, the 18th July, I have *General Return* THE LAST, from my old agent in the Inverness district, in which, he allows of a balance of stock in my favour of £251 : 19s. which, of course, must have been made over in due proportions, to his two successors in the management, as it would appear, that, in that transaction the young man delivers up his charge ; —as the next remittances, of date, the 15th August, exactly up to four weeks afterwards, came from the two men who had succeeded him.

Such remittances as I was now doomed to receive, soon baffled all my previous calculations, but I had just to fight on with them, the best way I could, until *the unprofitable work* was brought to a conclusion, at an after period, and in the way, I shall afterwards have occasion to notice.

To return to the business of my auctions, it will be recollected, that to take TIME by the forelock in regard to them, while one of my agents was operating in the northern isles, my son had commenced his winter campaign at Berwick, by the 28th of August, or before summer, properly so called, (*the summer of naturalists*)\* had passed away.†

While all these wheels were kept moving in regular and harmonious order, in order to bring forward the necessary supplies by the time of the arrival of the day of payment, in January, I see that my expected northern agent, had arrived some time in course of the month of September ; not, however, that this might be his final resting place, or rather the final termination of his labours on my account, for owing to circumstances that must hereafter be mentioned, he was oblig-

\* The summer of naturalists, may be said to begin on the first of June, and therefore must comprehend the month of August,—this will be found to form a more natural division of the seasons, than that commonly adopted, as February is usually one of the most winter like months we have.

† After continuing at *Berwick*, to the 16th Sept. and at *Kelso*, from the 18th to the 30th, we find him at *Jedburgh*, from the 2d to the 7th of Oct. at *Hawick*, from the 16th to the 21st, at *Denham* and *Morbattle*, from 23d to 28th do. and at *Smallholm* and *Greenlaw*, from 30th to 4th Nov. Meantime it appears, that I had a fortnight in *Edinburgh*, in the month of October, by Messrs J. C. and Son, and another fortnight, same month, by Messrs M'L. and S.—while the blank week in my son's route, viz. from the 9th to the 14th Oct. seems to be accounted for, by the sale in *Dunbar*, on that week.

ed to be despatched again, at no great distance of time, to the nearer neighbourhood of his former labours.\*

Meantime, while my son was proceeding with his operations, assisted by the young man who had recently returned from the north, when he could be conveniently spared from the other concerns of winding up in the home districts; in which we found it necessary occasionally to employ him, the remittances from the north dwindled away into such *mere nothings*, as to induce me, once more, to despatch my former northern agent back to that quarter; or at least to the ground where the new managers were now employed, and so as to meet one of them at Inverness on the 2d December, in order to put things into a train of more speedy winding up, under his own particular superintendence.

And it was certainly full time that some prompt measure of the kind should be adopted, when the returns had arrived at such a pitch of depression as scarcely to pay expenses.

One mischief, however, often generates another, and the very circumstance that obliged us to dispense with T. C.'s services here at the time, viz., the nothingness of these northern returns, at the instant when I was still, or had lately been counting something upon them against the 4th of January, induced me to forward to a firm in Aberdeen, a pretty large supply of books, to be auctioned by them, in their own wareroom, on commission. But, although, to use the words of a friend, writing to me near the end of the year, the sending of these books helped to make "*a hole in my stock this season.*" I had no great reason, in the end, as will be seen in my next chapter, to boast of this new Aberdeen adventure!

\* As the year drew towards a period, my son, I observe, who had arrived in course of his round, by the beginning of November, at *Greenlaw*, broke up from that place, after finishing his sale on the 4th,—auctioned at *Litholm* and *Beckes* on the 6th and 11th,—at *Dunse*, from the 13th to the 18th,—after which, and continuing most likely at home, during the *Dunbar* Fair week,—he appears to have made a trial at *Inverwick* and *East Burne*, and then had a few weeks' sale again at *Dunbar*, from the 9th to the 16th of December,—after this, we find him once more, with a sale at *Dunse*, commencing on the 19th, and likely continuing till he returned, at the end of the year, more especially, as the remittances then sent over, appear to have been pretty respectable, and advertised for a day's sale, for a limited time, at reduced prices, as well as for continuation by auction, in the evenings.



## CHAPTER XXX.—1821.

A temporary glimpse of sunshine.—Old customs alluded to, and when, one of them was discontinued.—First Sunday of the year, family dinner—Circumstances that conspired, to render serene the morning of 1821.—The dependent man's best comfort.—Pleasing motto to my new retrospect.—Reflections of the author, when arrived at the MILE STONE of *half a century*.—Delusive prospects.—A wide yawning chasm again opening to devour my happiness.—Numerous evils, again mustering around me.—A most unhappy discovery at this particular period.—Intelligence at last arrives from Aberdeen.—But not such as I expected.—A comfortable breakfast, very uncomfortably put an end to.—New Spring auction campaigns.—More flowers, spring up in my path.—Order for my Monthly Monitor, from Mr —, and kind letter from Mr Wilberforce.—Pleasing materials for forming a nosegay of exquisite fragrance.—All necessary, to refresh, and fit me, against the approaching conflicts.—Extensive auction routes in the north.—My northern agent receives his final instructions to come home.—Sales at Berwick, &c.—Bring out my improved edition of Tom Bragwell.—The wheels again put in motion, after the return of my northern agent.—Sales at Dunbar, and sales continued in different places of East Lothian, and Berwickshire.

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ALTHOUGH I had certainly made a considerable "hole in my stock," as my friend called it, and had succeeded in bringing my publication concern into a very narrow compass by what it once was, by the end of the year 1820, yet, I had not brought my labours, in regard to either the one or the other, to a completion. Still a good deal remained to be done in the one way, and a little rather troublesome and procrastinated business in the other;—but, upon the whole, I must have entered the year 1821, with my mind relieved from a considerable part of the pressure that had long borne upon it,—as it would appear, I had also, at this time, got at least a transitory respite from those bodily ailments, which had, on such occasions of late, contributed their share to incapacitate me for social enjoyment.

It had long been my practice, not only to indulge myself with my solitary walk on NEW-YEAR'S DAY, and my family with a convivial meeting of friends on the NEW HANSEL MONDAY EVENING, (preferred, no doubt, to this honour among its neighbouring holidays, in consequence of its being the day

kept by my much venerated father, while he was spared to sojourn with us,)—but to make it a point, to have as many of my own family, as could conveniently attend, to sit down along with me, at our family dinner, on the **FIRST SUNDAY OF THE YEAR.**

Although the merry meetings on Hansel Monday evening, may be said to have ceased with my more fortunate and better days ; as I may now take the liberty to designate those happy years which had passed down the stream of time, previous to my having laid aside my *silver headed cane*, at the commencement of these dreadful struggles, which have followed so closely in the wake, of the great misfortune that befel me, in 1816\*—yet, the more sober assemblings at my new-year's Sunday family dinners, were kept up, so long as I had influence enough to command them, and from certain reminiscences connected with it, I think, that I appeared at the board in pretty good health and spirits on the present occasion.

There are two things, indeed, that must have contributed much to make me enter this year with comparative serenity. One of my sons, had been honoured by his worthy master, on the expiry of his apprenticeship towards the end of the year, by having a party at dinner along with him on the occasion, in his own house, at which, I recollect, myself, my son W. and our much esteemed friend Mr G——. were present ;—while the other, the youngest, although his indenture had not yet expired, had been removed to a little distance, and put into *a more confidential situation*, under his old master.

And let not grandeur smile, at what it may be pleased to designate “these homely joys,”—and, to it, uninteresting statements,—in the “simple annals of the poor ;”—for, the well-being, and well-doing, of children, are the dependent

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\* My *silver headed cane*, was but a small luxury, but it seems to have been the height of my ambition, to display it on Sundays, on my journeyings, to, and from the church, previous to my great misfortune, in 1816. Since that period, it has been laid aside, nor do I recollect either where it is, or when I last laid my hands on it. The small establishment of a *silver headed cane*, was indeed, easily laid aside, and so far as it only was concerned, I had truly but small cause to regret, that my case should have afforded an opportunity of proving the truth of the proverb, —“**HE THAT IS LOW NEED FEAR NO FALL.**”

man's best comfort, and greatest treasure ;—and, oh ! that this truth were more cherished and attended to by those—who have parents' eyes to witness—parents' ears to hear of,—and parents' hearts to *bleed*, in witnessing, and hearing of, their transgressions !

Be this as it may, I must have been in a happy mood, and contented and cheerful frame of mind, when, on my birthday this year, the 14th January, I committed my Annual Retrospect to paper, under the cheering motto of “ the prospect of hope,” as will appear from the following extract :—

“ As the weary and almost worn-out traveller, after he has escaped many a danger—after he has endured many a hard and painful toil—after he has surmounted many an almost insurmountable obstacle—when he, at last, finds himself on the top of some fair eminence, from which he beholds his future progress, if not entirely divested of intervening obstacles, yet plain and easy, in comparison with that which he has already passed, and presenting nothing very formidable to damp his hopes of being ultimately able, with a little more exertion, to reach the destined goal of his journey, imbibes new spirits from the prospect, and catches, as it were, new energy from the view ;—so I, a weary, and almost worn-out pilgrim, in the journey of life, am at last, when arrived at THE MILE-STONE OF HALF A CENTURY,\* indulged, by the blessing of a kind Providence, with such a view of future prospects, as, after the troubles I have undergone of late years, cannot fail to calm the soul, and impart new energy to the mind.”

Alas ! little did I think, that, at the very time I was indulging myself in these fond, but delusive, “ prospects of hope,” a wide yawning chasm was *already* opening its insatiable jaws, to swallow up my future peace of mind, with all my visionary delineations of fancied happiness !—That, a new source of poignant and protracted suffering was now in the act of developing, or was about to develope itself, in such a form as was not much longer to be mistaken ;—while numerous evils of a lesser nature, but sufficiently calamitous in

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\* Born January 14, 1771,—January 14, 1821,—Aged, 50.

their way, were, I too soon found, mustering around, to harass me in my progress, and convince me, in language that could not be misunderstood, that "the prospect of hope" I had been so happily indulging in, and so fondly cherishing, was, at best, deceitful and fallacious—and that, I had indeed yet much to endure,—much to suffer, in the journey of life.

In regard to the greater evil,—nature,—and inclination,—and pity,—all conspire to require me to draw a veil over it ; although, in respect to the others, it may be considered in the light of Aaron's rod, and as, swallowing them all up in magnitude and importance.

Of the latter description, I may, however, reckon the tantalizing business, occasioned by the yet slow progress made in the winding up of my publication concerns in the north, now that the last of my instalments had become due ; and the circumstance, that no remittance had been received from Aberdeen, in time for being available for that purpose, at the time they were so.

Towards the end of January, I, however, got the remittance of two bills, at different, but short dates, from that quarter, which although behind hand for one purpose, would still be in good time for others ;—and it was a great consolation for me to think, that that remittance, was promised to be followed by another, so soon as more, or the whole sales, had been effected.

By this time, however, a new source of annoyance, or of vexatious import, made its appearance—by the publication in London, under a fictitious name—of the very work, with a very slight alteration, that I had been so long, fondly contemplating, the publication of myself in an improved form, in the hopes that, with the recommendation, I thought I might now count upon procuring, it might one day be of use in the way of, bettering *my now so greatly fallen fortunes* ; although, the necessity laid upon me for other exertions, such as I have been detailing to my readers, had not previously left me, (as may be easily imagined) sufficient leisure, for the purpose.

And it was the more provoking, that this discovery should have been made, at *the particular time*, when, having cleared

away the greater part, of the remainder of the book in which the work in question had made its original appearance, I seem to have removed, one part of the impediment of my going to press, with the new and improved edition, so soon as the requisite leisure could be obtained—and which, I was now in the hopes of speedily obtaining, in consequence of the small compass to which I had brought my other engagements.

This unhappy discovery, at so critical a moment, naturally produced much irritation, and this irritation led to some unpleasant correspondence, and altercation with the gentleman, whose name was upon the title, and confessed himself as the publisher; but I am so far from wishing to provoke any thing hostile, in my yet depressed state, on that account, that, leaving the merits of my improved edition to speak for itself, or another to speak for it, when it comes afterwards to be noticed, I shall here make no further allusion to the subject, and therefore dismiss it without even mentioning the name of the London publisher; who must indeed, have been imposed upon himself, if he paid, what he says in his letter of the 9th of February, now before me, — — for the manuscript!—in the hopes, that a gentleman of his professed nice feelings otherwise, will ~~now~~ sincerely wish, if he has not done so already, that he had had, nothing to do in a transaction, that could occasion, even a momentary uneasiness, to one situated as I must have been at that period;—for, by the time of the date of his letter, I must have been longing for the further accounts, promised from Aberdeen, in the letter accompanying the bills of the 19th January, and which I see, had not arrived, by the 19th of the month following.

It happened, however, that I was not to be long kept in suspense in this respect,—for, as I was sitting quietly at breakfast one morning in the little room off my back shop, (it may be supposed so long after the latter date, as to give it time to reach its destination,) a letter bearing the Aberdeen post mark, was put into my hands.—Long looked for, I must have thought, has come at last, for,—from some circumstance or other, which I cannot, at present distinctly recollect, I had been particularly pressed for money at that time, and had

no doubt been casting many a longing look, to the quarter from whence a supply was expected.

The seal, it may be presumed, would be broken with alacrity—and it fortunately so happened, that at the instant, or before I had time to do so, my wife had been called away to some person in the shop—which gave me leisure, *on observing the contents*, to effect my retreat, and take time to compose myself, before my re-appearance, in solitude and in sorrow;—for what does my kind reader think, this remittance, so much wearied and so anxiously looked for,—was composed of?

The letter, it is true, contained the account of sales up to the 10th of February, amounting to nearly double the amount, I had before received value for in bills, after deducting too, all expenses—but alas! the information was followed by the grievous intelligence, that instead of any thing being now forthcoming, Messrs ———, my agents on this occasion, had become bankrupt—and that, in place of more funds being derivable from that quarter—my two former bills, were *now*, in a fair way of coming back upon me.

These I have classed among my *lesser* evils; but I can assure my readers, they were not felt as of trivial import by me at the time;—and it was on account of the way that I found myself affected, on observing the contents of this harrowing epistle—so fatal to my hopes,—that I contrived, by my timely retreat, and the appearance I afterwards assumed, to beguile for once, that dear partner, who had, so long and so often shared my griefs; and to prevent her, from knowing their full extent, on the present unhappy occasion.

Perhaps it was to help to make up this most unexpected deficiency, that I gave orders to the young man who still continued winding up in the north, to commence, once more, at intervals, a new auctioning campaign—beginning at *Cromarty* on the 5th March, and finishing at *Beaulieu* towards the end of April, previous to forwarding his books from Inverness to *Fort Augustus*, there to abide my further orders.\*

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\* Although, I have not these sales distinctly marked in the memorandum before me, yet I am inclined to think, the following took place also, in our own neighbourhood, in the month of January, viz. *Inverwick*, 10, 11,—*East Barns*, 12,—*Tynningham*, 16, 17,—*Whitekirk*, 18,—*Linton*, 19, 20,—*Eyemouth*, 24,

By the 20th of March, I see, matters might be considered as satisfactorily settled up, with one of the formerly officiating agents in the Inverness district,—and my letter of the 3d April, to the other, I trusted would soon bring matters to an amicable conclusion with him also.

But it is time that we now had a few flowers in the midst of these thorny paths—and by a letter to my much respected friend William Allen, Esq. dated the 13th March, accompanying invoice of a very handsome order for my *Monthly Monitor*; he had had, the goodness to desire me to send, for a particular purpose; I see, I had embraced the opportunity of the parcel to enclose a copy of that work, and of the *Cheap Magazine*, to present, if he thought well of it, to Mr Wilberforce, in order, that, at a time when there was such an outcry against the licentiousness of the press, that worthy individual might have an opportunity of judging, (as I expressed myself,) what had been going on in Scotland.—I here annex Mr Wilberforce's letter, acknowledging the receipt of the articles, just omitting that part of it, which has no bearing on, or reference to the subject.

“LONDON, 2d April, 1821.

“DEAR SIR,—For I cannot address as a stranger, any one, who appears to have been employing his faculties, with so much judicious and well directed beneficence.

Allow me to return you my best thanks, for the friendly present which I have just now received, of the volumes of your *Cheap Magazine* and *Monthly Monitor*. Just at present, I fear they will only tantalize me to enjoy a pleasure, which, for a time, I must debar myself. But during the recess, I hope to find leisure for becoming acquainted with your volumes, though this is a far slower operation, when conducted through the medium of another's eyes, than ones own.\*—Already, however, I have seen enough to assure me, that I shall highly approve of the plan of your publication.

If any thing ever brings you to London, or any where else where I am, I trust, you will do me the favour to let me form a personal acquaintance with you. Meanwhile, I remain, my dear Sir, your obliged and faithful servant,

(Signed) W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. Allow me to ask, if there has been any sale of your *Magazine*, in this part of the island.—I should be very glad to promote such a one.”

To this letter I replied on the 17th, in which I would most likely mention, that a considerable number of my C. M.

to 27,—*Coldingham*, 29,—and *Cockburnspath*, 30,—and from the circumstance of having had some bills printed, similar to the Dunee ones, but blank, and dated 1821, it is probable my son, might have gone out on a new southern round, after the sale at *Cockburnspath*, end of January,—although, to that, I cannot speak decidedly at present.

\* This is explained by the following line, in conclusion of the letter, “A complaint in my eyes, obliges me to dictate.”

had been sent to different parts of England, and thus, begun a correspondence with one, to whom, I had been taught to look up with a kind of veneration, almost from my infancy, and who, together with that Philanthropic individual, who had, in the presentation of my volumes, been the medium of introducing me to this worthy man, I must still look upon, as, **AMONG THE EXCELLENT ONES OF THE EARTH.**

These are choice flowers indeed, in the fair garden of creation, from which, as well as from the correspondence of such **ILLUSTRIOUS CHARACTERS**, as, the amiable Authoress of popular models—the persevering Patriot formerly alluded to, whose portrait graces the town hall of Berwick,—the Rev. Dr Mavor, and Lindley Murray, the long tried friends to, and guides of youth—together with the Henry Greatheads, and Captain Manbys, who have proved themselves in our day, the steady and unflinching friends of the unfortunate—I shall ever, I trust, find a delight in forming a nosegay; and regaling myself, in my solitary moments, by its fragrance.

All however, alas! was little enough to infuse into me sufficient spirits to bear me up under the new trials that were fast approaching, and to enable me to endure those mournful scenes and heart rending calamities, I was doomed to experience, during the remaining months of this peculiarly afflictive year—for, in course of the summer, I had indeed much trouble from an existing cause, over which, I was obliged to draw a veil when I had occasion to recur to it formerly, and as the same reasons still continued, and still continue to exist,—what happened in course of that summer—that autumn—and that winter,—so far as that cause was concerned,—must still remain among the veiled subjects.

I mentioned formerly, that my northern agent had been ordered, to commence a series of auction operations, beginning at *Cromarty*, and finishing at *Beaully*.—In course of the summer, he proceeded to *Fort Augustus*, and thence, winding up as he went along, performed a pretty extensive circuit, until he received my final instructions to finish and come home, at *Aberdeen*, in the end of October,—embracing the finishing, as far as it was practicable in the winding up of the Orkney and Caithness concerns, and the opportu-



nity of doing all he could, as on former occasions, at *Kirkwall Fair*, in August.\*

In the meantime, I see, my son had been engaged with a sale at *Berwick*, towards the end of September, at which time, it appears, now, that I got my mind somewhat relieved from other matters (for idleness, it must plainly appear by this time, was not my element,) I was busy with the improved edition of *Tom Bragwell*, a work, that I was enabled to bring from the press in a complete form, in the month of ——— following.†

\* This appears to have been a most extensive circuit indeed, embracing all the places in *Orkney* and *Caithness*,—*Sutherland* and *Ross-shire*,—*Cremarty* and *Inverness-shires*,—*Nairn*,—*Murray*,—*Bang*,—and *Aberdeenshire*,—where we had sales to make, or winding-up business to perform; and which kept the young man's hands pretty full of employment, from the time he commenced at *Cremarty*, on the 5th March, till he finished at *Aberdeen*, on the 27th of Oct.

† After the sale at *Berwick*, I see we had one at *Dunbar*, for a fortnight, commencing the 8th of Oct. and ending on the 20th,—and on my northern agent's arrival from the north, with rather a heavy supply of remnants, &c. I put the wheels in motion again, and set him to work in the month of November, in the villages in our more immediate neighbourhood,—and in *Berwickshire*, in the month of December.—These auctions, I see, embraced *Tynningham*, on the 6th and 7th November,—*Whitekirk*, on the 8th,—*Linton*, 9th, 10th,—*Whittingham*, 12th, 13th,—*Inverwick*, 14th, 15th,—*East Berne*, 16th and 17th,—*Ecclis*, on 3d and 4th Dec.—*Litholm*, 5th, 6th,—*Greenlaw*, 7th, 8th,—*Dunae*, 10th to 13th,—*Swinton*, 17th, 18th,—*Ladykirk*, 19th and 20th,—*Whitome*, 21st, 22d,—*Paxton*, 24th, 25th,—*Hutton*, 26th, 27th,—and *Allanton*, where we finished our sales for 1821, on the 28th and 29th.

## CHAPTER XXXI.—1822.

Of late, had many unhappy returns of the New Year.—But had never before, experienced such a one as the present.—Alas! for the delusive “prospect of hope.”—My new motto, a more appropriate one.—More miseries brewing, or in abeyance.—Spring auctions.—Am made acquainted with my old agent’s intention of leaving this, for America.—My resolution in consequence, and the causes that led to it.—The young man falls into my views.—Preparations for his departure.—Performs his last round of auctions on this side the Atlantic.—A *third* expedient adopted, in order to reduce my still heavy Book stock.—Cheap Catalogue for a limited time only.—Great events destined to take place in that short time.—Unhappy check I suddenly met with.—Dreadful convulsions in East Lothian, occasioned by the defalcation of the manager of the East Lothian Bank.—New general shop bill.—My former agent sails with my new adventure to America.—Visit from much respected London friends.—Pleasant excursion to the Lake at Pressmennan, &c.—These little pleasure jaunts, *useful*, in my then situation.—Set out on my journey to the west.—A bustling time in Edinburgh, preparing for the King’s visit.—Changed appearance of the surrounding scenery.—Great alterations in progress.—Not a time for business.—Go forward to Glasgow.—An inconvenient season there also.—Strong tide of emigration setting towards the east.—The effect of heat, or of habit, or of both on a drowsy member of Dr C.’s congregation.—Do business in Glasgow on the Monday morning.—Go to Paisley by the afternoon coach.—Transact business there.—Return and finish at Glasgow, in the evening.—Leave Glasgow for Edinburgh, with the Tuesday morning tract boat.—Do business at Killyth by the way.—The windy Tuesday, being the day previous to the King’s arrival in the roads.—Employment at Leith, at the time of his Majesty’s arrival.—Other matters that must be passed over.—Auction expedition by the foot of the Braes of Angus.—Intelligence, not of the most pleasing description, from America.—Second expedition to Angus-shire.

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IN a letter from a friend, written on the last, or among the last days of the year, he feelingly concludes in allusion to some recent events, “You have of late, had many *unhappy* returns of the new year,” and he was right; I had indeed, of late, had many *unhappy returns of the new year*, and very different, indeed, from what I experienced when he once knew me:—when youthful anticipation ran high, and these bitter ingredients had not, as yet, been stirred up in my cup;—but he well knew, that although the subject belonged to what

I shall now call the veiled, ———, leaving the reader to fill it in, veiled matter, veiled picture, or whatever may please him, —I never before had such a return as this,—that I had never felt, or experienced, on any former occasion, a sorrow, like unto the sorrow I now felt, and must, in silence, continue to feel.

And yet, this was the state in which I found myself placed, at the close of the year upon which I had entered under such encouraging auspices, and the cheering motto of “the Prospect of Hope!”

By the time, however, that I came to select the head for my new retrospect, which I see I committed to paper, on the 20th of January, I had seen cause to change my style by adopting that more appropriate motto, under present circumstances, and past experience, “We see here but darkly,”—and which, the events of the year fully proved, was well chosen, and well timed; for a dark chasm still lay before me, into which I was about to plunge, unaware of the inextricable nature of the vortex which was concealed underneath. And there was yet, another mischief brewing in the surrounding atmosphere, that was soon also to occasion me no little vexation and distress.

I mentioned, towards the conclusion of my last chapter, that, in consequence of my agent’s having arrived from the north, with a rather heavy supply of remnants, &c. I had again put the wheels in motion, and kept him operating till the end of the year. But, as by that time, he had made but a *small hole*, in that part of the stock, and as I had yet by far too much on hand otherwise, to lie dormant for the present, only to take up that time afterwards, which I was most anxious now to devote to other purposes, I not only arranged with this young man to perform another pretty extensive circuit in course of the spring months, or, I believe, rather as far up in them as his license extended, which I think expired on the — of April; but having learned, that after the period of his engagement with me expired, he intended to take a trip across the Atlantic, and try his fortunes in that land of promise, to which my attention, it may be recollected, was once directed by my *old friend* PETER, on a former occasion, I thought I could not do better, after these sales were over, than

embrace the opportunity of making, at least a trial, of what an adventure to that quarter of the globe would produce; under the superintendence and management of one, who, on so many occasions, and in so many instances, had been placed in situations of trust, and who had, in fact, given me so many proofs of his fidelity in such situations before.

My ideas on the subject, with the terms upon which I required his co-operation, being submitted to the young man, he at once assented to them; and while he went out in the performance of his round, I proceeded in my preparations to have things in readiness when he should be ready. These sales commenced at *Chirnside*, being adjoining to the village where he left off on the 27th December, on the 2d of January,—and were continued in various places of BERWICKSHIRE and EAST LoTHIAN, to the 30th of March, when he finished his country round at *Longformacus*,—and afterwards, put a finish to the business, by a sale at *Dunbar*, which he commenced on Monday, the 1st of April.\*

While this young man was performing his rounds, and I, had not been idle, in the meantime, in getting things ready for his operations on the other side of the Atlantic; it appears that I had been no less busy in another particular, viz. in editing a new, and what I wished to consider, in consequence of the head notes, or arguments which I affixed to the different chapters, an improved edition of Mrs Grant's "History of an Irish Family," to which, I made room for an *addenda* at

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\* The sale at *Chirnside*, continued on the 2d and 3d January,—afterwards we find him at *Auchincraw*, 4th, 5th,—*Ayton*, 7th, 8th and 9th,—*Eyemouth*, 10th and 12th,—*Coldingham*, 14th to 16th,—*Cockburnspath*, 17th to 19th,—*Pencailand*, 22d to 24th,—*West Salton*, 25th, 26th,—*East Salton*, 28th,—*Gifford*, 30th, 31st,—*Garvald*, 1st, 2d February,—*Stenton*, 4th, 5th,—*North Berwick*, 7th, 8th, 9th,—*Dirleton*, 11th, 12th,—*Gullen*, 13th, 14th,—*Athol-staneford*, 15th, 16th,—*Aberlady*, 18th, 19th,—*Longniddry*, 20th, 21st,—*Cockensie*, 22d,—*Prestonpans*, 25th to 27th,—*Tranent*, 28th, and 1st and 2d March,—*Gladesmuir*, 4th, 5th,—(the latter being on the windy Tuesday, when the sale may be said, to have been completely blown up by the storm,)—at *Penston*, he had also miserable sales on the 6th and 7th,—and afterwards proceeded with rather better effect at *Elphinston*, on the 8th and 9th,—*Ormiston*, 11th, 12th,—*Pathhead*, 13th, 14th,—*Upperkeith*, 15th, 16th,—*Fala*, 18th, 19th,—*Oxton*, 20th, 21st,—*Lauder*, 22d, to 26th,—*Westruther*, 27th, 28th,—*Longformacus*, 29th and 30th. So that, if we were forced at last to try the new ground, beyond the great world of waters, it must be seen by this, and the other extensive circuit formerly mentioned, to the northward of *Aberdeen*,—that it was not for want of trying first, what our own country could produce.

the end, entitled, "The Exemplary Mother, or Dutiful Parents and Good Children," by the same amiable and sensible authoress; who was not only pleased to grant me permission, but to furnish me with sundry emendations, from her own valuable pen, on the occasion.

As neither the progress of these country sales,—nor the goods in preparation for America,—nor both together,—were likely to exhaust my stock, or rather to bring it within proper compass for a retail business, which was now my predominant wish,—I thought upon a *third* expedient, and that was, to publish a CHEAP CATALOGUE, &c. which I issued to the public, immediately upon the conclusion of my sales by auction, and kept the books on sale on the terms offered, as expressed on the title, for "*a very limited time only.*"

These catalogues, were not only recommended to the notice of the managers of subscription and parish libraries, but were sent out to private individuals likely to purchase, accompanied by a card, expressing my anxiety "to clear away as many of the articles as possible, by the time mentioned,"—*i. e.* the ensuing Whitsunday.

But alas! soon after this extensive catalogue, containing many valuable works, made its appearance, and long before Whitsunday,—a convulsion was to take place, which was to shake East Lothian to its centre, and make people more anxious to clap their hands on their pockets, to keep fast what cash they could secure in them, than to let a single shilling escape for any purpose whatever, unconnected with the purchase of, the first necessities of life.

I need not say, that I here allude to the dreadful circumstance of the sudden explosion of the East Lothian Bank, occasioned by Mr Borthwick's flight, on the evening of the 18th, leaving matters in such a state of confusion, that it required both time, and patience, and I may add, a considerable degree of fortitude in the directors and other proprietors, to come at the extent of the evil. This unforeseen, and totally unexpected calamity, among other mischiefs it occasioned of greater importance, may be said to have completely upset, and blasted, at almost the moment they were formed, all my expectations from that sale,—many of the di-

rectors and gentlemen connected with that establishment, being among my best customers, in the book line ; but, indeed, what farther could be expected at that time from the sale of such articles, in a county, *now* so poverty-struck as East Lothian had become, by this tremendous blow to her capitalists ! —the whole of whose dependents must have suffered proportionally ?

In the meantime, while these memorable, because, most afflictive events, were taking place around us,—and the deplorable consequences of this lamentable occurrence, were, as might have been anticipated, developing, and manifesting themselves among all degrees, and descriptions of persons in the community,—I was proceeding progressively, in getting things in readiness for my transatlantic adventure, previous to which, I see, I had published what I shall call, a “New General Shop Bill,” consisting of a *post folio* half sheet, printed on both sides, and including, on the back, our list of patent medicines, which, at the date marked, May 1822, will be found to be very respectable for a country town.

By the 16th of that month, (May) I see, I had furnished the young man with an invoice of *ten* packages, the receipt of which, he acknowledges in his letter, of date, the 31st ; and in the bill of loading, it appears, all were shipped on board the *Intrepid*, then lying in the harbour of Greenock, bound for New York ; and by his sailing letter afterwards, I am given to understand, he was to sail on the 11th of June, which, having no doubt he did, I observe, that to make matters as secure as possible, so far, I had covered the whole by insurance, effected with a gentleman in this place, on the 18th.

It was on the *first* of July, this year, and when a near connexion was engaged at a meeting on the affairs of the East Lothian Bank, I observe, that we were favoured with a visit from our much respected and esteemed friend, Mr — from London, who, accompanied by his daughter and a friend, were at the time on a tour of health. Notwithstanding the untoward situation in which he found us, in consequence of my protracted misfortunes, and the recent calamity that had befallen the county, we contrived to make this dear friend and his travelling companions as comfortable as possible, dur-

ing their short sojourn among us.—Pity that it had not been longer, as it was, alas! the *LAST*, as well as the *first*, visit, from that highly endeared, on many accounts, and much respected individual, that we were ever destined to have.

The little pleasant jaunt that I was enabled to take with these welcome strangers, to the Lake at Pressmennan, and the beautiful grounds of Biel, would no doubt be of service to me, in the way of a restorative ;—for I had many a hint given me, that I took too little exercise in that way,—and my health and spirits, certainly required something, at that time, to brace them up to the proper pitch, and put them in tone, preparatory to setting out on a journey which I had been contemplating for some time, to the westward ; and which, it will be seen, I undertook in the following month, just in time to meet his Majesty, on his visit to Scotland, at Edinburgh, on my return.

On the morning of Friday, the 9th of August, I see, I set out for Edinburgh, where I had business to transact, previous to going forward to Glasgow. But Edinburgh was in such a state of internal ferment at the time, in consequence of the great preparations going on for the reception of his Majesty, then daily expected, that, of all the times and seasons I could have chosen, I could not have selected, or fallen upon a worse, for business.

Every person was either engaged in making preparations for, or talking about the intended visit, and I could not turn my eyes to the castle, as I hastily pursued my business course along the streets of the new town,—or gave them a cast upwards, to Arthur Seat, spotted with its tents,—or to the wonderful alterations going on in all quarters of the town,—but I saw something to remind me that this was not a time for business in Edinburgh ; so that, I resolved to go forward to Glasgow, and finish there, and at Paisley, in the first place, in the hopes to fare better in the good old city, on my return.

On the following morning, therefore, viz., that of Saturday the 10th of August, I went forward to Glasgow by one of the coaches ; and in order to make up for some of the time I had spent to so little purpose in Edinburgh, and to make my

stay in the west the shorter, I lost not a moment in proceeding to business ; but, what with being told, that one person had gone off to Edinburgh, (to which point the tide seemed to have been for some time setting in, from all quarters,) to meet the King—that another, less curious in these matters, had been absent for some time at bathing quarters—I soon found, that even the inhabitants of the great commercial city of Glasgow itself, could allow their minds to be directed to other purposes than those of mere commerce. So that, I got comparatively little business done on that day, in that city also, to what I expected.\*

After finishing, as far as possible, in Glasgow, on the Monday morning, I went down to Paisley by one of the afternoon coaches—(it was the one driven by, and, I believe, the property of, the *gentleman*, said to have been an officer in the army ;)—and, after transacting business there, returned to Glasgow, in the evening.

Next morning saw me on board of the track boat, with a very crowded assemblage of passengers, on my way to Edinburgh. But my limits do not permit me to enter into details of what I either saw, or heard, or befel me, including the accident, from which I so narrowly escaped, in stepping from the boat, in order to call at Kilsyth, on that JOURNEY OF A DAY,—being the *windy Tuesday*,—the day previous to his Majesty's arrival in Leith Roads, on the 14th.

Neither have I room to enlarge upon the way I employed my time, in winding up matters in Edinburgh and Leith, on

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\* So great, indeed, was the *mania*, (shall I call it, when coupled with so great a name ?) for emigration to the eastward, that I was informed, before I left Glasgow, that the Rev. Dr Chalmers himself, whom I had heard in his own church of St John's, on the morning of the Sunday on which I remained at Glasgow, had also taken his flight eastwards, although it would be presuming too much in me to say, to meet and to welcome, the coming rays of Royalty ; for I observed, soon after my return home, a notice from, or in, a Dumfries paper, that the Rev. Dr Chalmers had been preaching there, on a mission to the south,—accompanied by the piquant remark,—that a person might sit, and have his pockets picked, while the Doctor preached, but that it was impossible any of his auditors could fall asleep ! An assertion that I might have, with good reason, called in question at the time, seeing—such is the power of habit, or, it may be, the extreme heat of the day, or of both—I had but recently witnessed, in the pew just before me, in the Doctor's own church, and while the Doctor himself preached—and most likely one of his own congregation—a person,—and a good-looking, stout, and healthy person too,—not only asleep, but remain for such a length of time under the power of the drowsy enchanter, that one might have picked his pocket, or done what he liked with him, fifty times, without his knowing any thing of the matter.



the 14th, until I was interrupted in the latter place, by the shutting up of the shops in all directions, on the arrival of the little squadron in the Roads.

These, and a number of other matters, connected with the fine sights I saw, in that throng, happy, and stirring time in the city, must all be passed over, in order to enable me, to make room for others of more consequence, to be detailed towards the conclusion of my present chapter.

The large number of remnants brought home by my agent, from the north—the little progress he had been able to make in the reducing of them, after his return, to the time of his departure for America—and the complete failure, I may say, of my sale by catalogue, in consequence of the distressing occurrence formerly alluded to—with the little prospect we had, of being able to do any more good, in our own *now impoverished* county, for some time at least,—made us look out for *new* ground, for our future operations ;—and, I resolved, at last, upon making the experiment, as to how far, a range along by the foot of the *BRAES OF ANGUS*, might be conducive, to make up the deficiencies, occasioned by being driven from our old ground,—among the *fertile plains* of *BERWICKSHIRE* and *EAST LOTHIAN*.\*

So that, if we were not successful, it was not for want of going to distant ground, or far beyond the bounds of our now unfortunate county, as I am sorry to call it,—and, I may add, its unfortunate neighbour, Berwickshire—for it, too, was too nearly situated to escape the effects of the explosion—in search of it. But, upon the whole, I have little reason to complain in this respect, for the produce of the foot of the *Braes of Angus*, certainly, on this occasion, came fully up to our most sanguine expectations.

And it was well for us that it did so ; for, if the accounts

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\* In accordance with this plan, I see that my son after trying a sale at *Berwick*, for 5 days, commencing on Tuesday, the 3d of Sept.—and at *Tweedmouth*, for a few days afterwards, commencing on the 9th,—operating with his auctions at *Forfar*, in *ANGUS-SHIRE*, from the 25th Sept. to the 14th of Oct.—at *Kirriemuir*, from the—, to the—do.—At *Blairgowrie*, in *PERTH-SHIRE*, from the—to the—.—At *Brechin* in *ANGUS-SHIRE* again, from the—to the—,—and then at *Dundee*, from the—to the 4th November, on which day, I see his last returns are dated.—N. B. The returns for these blanks, have for the present fallen by, but it is of little consequence, as the sales are marked in regular succession, so that, the time at each place, may be nearly guessed at.

we had recently received of the arrival of the young man in America, brought with them nothing else satisfactory—neither did his letter of the 12th November, from which it appeared, that, having been laid up with the yellow fever, and other *et ceteras*, I had nothing to look for, as being immediately forthcoming, from that quarter. Indeed, the being made acquainted with this circumstance, seems to have determined me to try the northern range again, but the success was by no means equal to the former; and, as two of my returns, I see, are dated the 17th and 23d of December, from *Forfar*,—and on the 26th and 30th, from *Dundee*,—after which, the auctioneer soon made his appearance personally,—I may say—and so ended, the transactions of the year.

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## CHAPTER XXXII.—1823.

It would have been well, could I have said, that with the transactions of 1822, an end had been put to our procrastinated troubles.—Still surrounded by prospects far from pleasing.—Another sober New Year.—Disastrous intelligence, accompanied by the *first* and *last* remittance from America.—Lamentable extracts from my American letter.—The judgment of charity, on such an afflicting occasion.—A rather strange expression, apologized for, in the best manner possible.—A new ground of hope.—My mind diverted from these disagreeables, by another subject of immediate interest.—Severe storm in the month of February.—Able to go westward, and attend a meeting of friends at —.—An affecting recollection.—Melancholy sofa scene.—Lines to a departed son.—Journey to the westward.—Visit the Edinburgh College Museum.—Recognized by an old acquaintance in coming out.—New winter auction campaign.—Route described.

AND, it would have been well could I have added, that, with “the transactions of the year,” an end had been put to those procrastinated troubles; for we certainly had had, a most tedious business to perform, in winding up, during the by-past year, what should have been wound up a twelvemonth before; and a full share of other vexatious matter to engage my attention along with it.

But, by the 14th January, the time when I wrote my next Retrospect, under the designation at the top, “My birthday,” it will be seen, this was by no means the case, or that manuscript would not have furnished matter for the following

short extract :—“ I am still surrounded with a prospect far from pleasing ;” and, in allusion to a letter I had received from my youngest son, then in a situation in Edinburgh, much about the same date, I see, I take occasion, in the same manuscript, to remark—“ I dare say, my new-year’s day this year was spent sober enough, and that, my solitary walk by the sea side was not accomplished without some mournful reflections, and most likely, some fearful forebodings.”

But what these reflections or forebodings were, I shall not here say, and as they no doubt referred principally to the subject *under the veil*, I trust, I need make no other apology for passing them over in silence.

In course of the month of February, I received another letter from New York, dated the 16th of the preceding month ; but such a piece of doleful intelligence from *that land of promise*, I certainly should not have expected !—if hope deferred had not already made me suspicious, and repeated disappointments had not, in some measure, prepared me for the event !

The young man begins, by saying, “ I am really sorry that it is not in my power to send a greater amount ;” and well he might, as the amount was only an order for the trivial sum of ———, upon a banking house in London, at a distant date ; and that was, alas ! the *first* and the *last* remittance I was doomed to receive from that quarter, out of the amount of invoices to the extent of \*—\*—\*—\*.

But the same gracious Being, who tempers the weather to the shorn lamb, and ushers in the midnight darkness, by twilight, did not permit me to see the *whole* extent of the evil at once ; and, from the representations given by the poor lad, however disappointed I might feel, how could I be angry with him ?

After the above preparatory preamble, he goes on to state —“ The trade here is in a miserable state. \* \* I have not the most distant prospect of ever doing any good in this country. \* \* By this time, you must have had mine, informing you, of my misfortune in having the yellow fever,” &c., &c. :—for I have neither room nor heart to go over the remainder of that lamentable epistle : and, as I have learned since I began to prepare these pages for the press, that the

writer is now removed, beyond that bourne, which interdicts all future commerce with mortals and immortals,—I would indulge the hope, in the judgment of charity, that things were exactly as he represented them at the time,—and so be disposed rather, to become his apologist, than otherwise.

There was one expression, indeed, that I did not like well, in his letter, viz., “Confidence is a word obsolete in the American vocabulary.” But still, I had no great reason to be much alarmed on that account. The young man was not an American—he had had the best of principles early instilled into him, by the most exemplary of parents—he was connected with a set of the most worthy, and honest, and, on these accounts, highly respected friends—he had long been, and had enjoyed much confidence, in my service; and had he not conducted himself much, very much indeed, to my satisfaction, it is not likely, he would ever have been entrusted, in the manner he was, with goods to so considerable an amount. I had no reason, therefore, not the smallest, to think, that in speaking of the American nomenclature, he had adopted, or meant to adopt, it as his own; and the expression, of course, although it sounded rather curious in my ear, gave me the less concern at the time;—and, I may add, my hopes were also kept the more alive, by his observing, towards the conclusion of his letter, “The next time I write, I shall send a statement of the products of the sales;”—and it must be allowed he had a very good reason for postponing this information, when he adds, “I have not yet got all disposed of.”

I have often observed, in the course of events, that at a time when there happened with me anything peculiarly calamitous, my mind was often drawn off from it, by some other intruding subject of less mournful aspect, and I have some reason to believe, that in this respect, I was far from being singular; although my space does not permit me to dwell upon, at present, what, the more I think of it, I must however consider in the light of, another most happy ordination.—But so it happened, that, about the time I received this unwelcome piece of intelligence,—and had my mind harassed by another most perplexing matter lately briefly alluded to,—I had been called upon to busy myself in another manner, and which, would no doubt contribute to divert my mind some-

what from the circumstances!—viz. the endeavouring to put my fourth son into a situation for succeeding to the business of a gentleman in the same profession, who had, in the preceding winter, paid the debt we all owe to nature.

In this, I knew, from the manner in which I was then situated, I could give him little assistance at that precise time, in a pecuniary point of view myself—and there was besides, a serious obstacle, in his youth and want of experience—but, in stating the matter clearly and candidly to a gentleman, who had long, and on many occasions, acted in a most friendly manner, when he could be of use in promoting the interests of my family—observing in course of my letter,—that the one objection, viz. that on account of his youth might “be in a great degree obviated, by his coming under an obligation, to submit to my guidance, and direction in his dealings, for some time; as well as to board himself under my roof.” I received in answer to that letter, (which it will be observed, had been delivered by the young man himself)—the following short and friendly reply:

“————— 25th February, 1823.

“ I have yours,—I am much pleased with your son,—and think you should not lose sight of the establishment you mention—I will be \* \* next Thursday, when, we can consider of the best method of raising for him the funds necessary.”  
Yours truly, &c.

Suffice it to say, that when this friendly gentleman did come down, at the time mentioned, arrangements were made for providing the young man with the necessary funds,—and in order not again to recur to the matter at that time, I may as well observe here in passing, that, I see that after purchasing a considerable proportion of the materials and of the stock, and going on with his preparations, he was able to announce, that he had commenced business, in the premises lately occupied by his predecessor in the same profession, by advertisement, dated the 5th of May next.

The storm in February this year, I find by several reminiscences, some of them of a most melancholy description, had been very severe.—Indeed, a friend in his letter of the 24th calls it “a terrible storm,” and some of my readers in *this quarter*, may possibly recollect something of it, when I

say, that it was the same, in which there were so many mails due at one time, and when, there was such a numerous arrival of them, on a *Fastens-e'en* or *Shrove Tuesday*.

The storm, however, had so far disappeared, or taken off by the end of the month, that, I find, that by Wednesday the 26th, I was able to go to the westward, and attend a meeting of friends, on what was considered by us all, a very important matter to the family ; but from which, as to any *lasting* good fruits resulting from it, we might as well never have met, or perhaps had better have staid at home.

I was never, however, backward in making an experiment, where there appeared, the *smallest* prospect of good being done by that experiment, and although some of the others seemed to be more sanguine of success, in this respect, than I was—yet, as the other parties seemed to think otherwise, at the time, I do not regret giving my consent to make the experiment agreed on,—little reason, indeed, as we have since had, to congratulate ourselves on the result.

It was some time in the month of July, I think, that I was much taken, on my return from a journey to the west, with my little namesake and grandson, as I passed through Haddington ; for little GEORGE, was indeed, a most pleasant and engaging child, and it was on that occasion, I think, that it was arranged that his mother should bring him east to pay us HIS FIRST VISIT, at a short time afterwards ;—and which led, to anticipations, never, alas ! to be realized ;—for, on the last day of July, likely just at the time we were looking for him down, according to promise, I received a letter from the father, acquainting me with the sudden death of the child, on the evening before. From sundry reminiscences, in my possession, I appear to have been much affected by the circumstance, of the little darling, lying in a kind of mournful state, in my house, and on the VERY SOFA, upon which, we had perhaps been counting upon witnessing his little gambols on that very day—Sunday, the 3d of August,—previously to his being borne forward to his final resting place, in his grand-sire's burial ground, in Dunbar church yard.—The following beautiful effusion, dated on the day of his death, will shew, how the afflicted parent was affected on the occasion :—

## TO MY DEPARTED SON.

By ———.

CHILD of my love ! why hast thou laid  
 Thy gentle head beneath the willow ?  
 Thy Father's arms, was warmer bed,  
 Thy Mother's breast a softer pillow.

We joyed to please thee—darling child !  
 Thou wert our little earthly treasure ;—  
 And in thy brow, serenely mild,  
 We read thy gratitude with pleasure.

When gazing on thine eyes of blue,  
 And cheeks, bedew'd with health's red roses,  
 We dreaded not that last adieu,  
 Which the dark grave too soon discloses.

Why did thou leave, thy cradle-bed,  
 And the fond bosom of thy mother,  
 To lay in dust thy gentle head,  
 Beneath a clay cold mossy cover.

Say, in what region of the sky  
 Is now thy blessed spirit roaming ?  
 That I may trace thy course on high,  
 When wand'ring in the star-light gleaming.

Heaven snatched thee faultless as thou grew,  
 A pure unspotted offering blossom,  
 Exhal'd thy spirit as the dew  
 That lies upon the lily's bosom.

So softly came the herald death,  
 As o'er thy form we weeping bended,  
 We scarce observ'd the parting breath,  
 When calm, to God, thy soul ascended.

But oft, my GEORGE, in future years,  
 Thy fate, untimely, I will mourn ;  
 And with a father's fondest tears  
 Bedew the turf that decks thy urn !

30th July, 1823.

I do not recollect the precise time, when I first visited the Edinburgh College Museum, preparatory to the description given of it in my *Popular Philosophy*, which then, as I got my mind more and more relieved from other considerations, must have been obtaining some ascendancy in my thoughts ; but I recollect distinctly enough, that it was on my way to the westward, to visit some friends in the month of August, this summer, that I embraced the opportunity of introducing my wife to this superb collection, in company with another lady and some friends,—and that it was, in coming out on this occasion, that we met with, and received so hearty a shake of the hand from, poor Mr Constable, then in the zenith of his glory,—and whose activity, perseverance, and enterprising spirit, in trade,—certainly merited a better fate, than what befel him at the last.

Although my heavy stock must, by this time, have been much reduced, yet, the best season for auctioning was not to be let slip, without attempting something, and, I accordingly find, we once more entered upon a new series, beginning at *Dunbar*, on the evening of the 1st of October, and finishing, with occasional intervals, at same place, on the last week of the year ;—and in the mean time, I availed myself of the busiest selling time in Edinburgh, to get Messrs M. and S. to introduce some of my books occasionally into their catalogues, during the months of November and December.\*

\* The sale in *Dunbar*, as above observed, commenced on Wednesday, the first of Oct. and continued to the 11th,—afterwards, we find my son operating at *Dunse*, on the 13th to the 18th,—at *Eccles* and *Litholm*, from the 21st to the 25th,—at *Kelso*, from 28th, to 1st Nov.—at *Swinton*, 3d, 4th,—*Ladykirk*, 5th, 6th,—*Whitsome*, 7th, 8th,—at *Allanton*, *Chirnside* and *Westruther*, week ending the 15th,—*Ayton* and *Coldingham*, from 17th to 22d ;—after this, there seems to be a small interval during our Fair week,—and then, the sales proceed at *Cockburnspath*, *East Barns*, and *Innerwick*, 1st to 6th Dec.—*Tynningham*, *Whittingham*, and *Linton*, 8th to 13th,—*Whittingham* and *Stenton*, 17th to the 20th, and a week at *Dunbar*, from the 22d to the 27th.

The nights, on which some of my articles were inserted in Messrs ———'s catalogues, in Edinburgh, were the 3d, 4th, 5th, 7th, 11th and 12th—and again, on the 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 22d Nov.—and 1st, 3d, and 4th of Dec.



## CHAPTER XXXIII.—1824.

Although the year 1824, brought with it, its cares and troubles, yet I had now got into comparatively smooth water, in many respects.—Certain matters, that I must however have felt keenly, or, which, could not have borne lightly on me at the time —The arch enemy of mankind, changes his mode of attack, but is defeated by my resolution, *NOT to curse God, and die*, but, to *BLESS GOD AND LIVE*.—Grateful aspirations in my new retrospect.—Am again indisposed.—Begin to think seriously, of proceeding with my “Book of Nature Laid Open.”—Circumstances, that must have contributed to induce me, to proceed in earnest with my work at this period —Beautiful extract from Galen.—Golden opportunities not lost sight of.—Moments of seclusion from the world, how they may be profitably employed, and well spent.—Night thoughts, as well as daily exertions, called into action.—All necessary, to enable me to progress with my task.—What seems to have been the will of providence, in this respect —Other concerns not neglected.—Spring auctions.—Write to a stranger in America.—His prompt reply.—Procedure adopted, after receiving the American intelligence.—Preparations for another extensive winter auction campaign.—“Cheap sale,” and “Literary Treat.”—Theatre of our new auction operations, from commencement, till their termination.—What must have contributed much, to put me in spirits, as 1824, drew to a close.

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THE year 1824 brought with it its cares and troubles, and, of course, its own anxieties and struggles; but, as I had now got into comparatively smooth water, in other respects, and these, however *acute* and *grievous* to be borne, may be said either to have belonged to the mysterious subject within the veil,—or so allied to, and connected with, other private concerns,—as not to come within the pale of, legitimate subject for public exposure, I shall pass them by, with this slight notice.

There are, however, certain reminiscences, which go to show, that, whatever relief I may have obtained, by this time, in regard to other matters—the troubles of the year, upon which I had now entered, were neither of a light, nor a temporary nature—and that neither did they fall *lightly*, nor bear *transiently*,—on my still seemingly devoted head!

For, it could not be a small matter, which could induce a dear friend, in writing to me so early as the 3d of January, as if afraid, that he had touched too strongly on a certain tender

chord, in a recent communication, to say, "I hope my last would not have a very bad effect," and that seemed to make him deeply regret having said any thing on the subject :—it could not be a light matter, that bore me down, and pressed me to the earth, by the weight of mental anguish, towards mid-summer, on that memorable sacramental Sunday, when I was confined to bed, suffering besides, under severe bodily indisposition,—while the family were at church :—and, it could not be a small or a light matter, indeed, which, towards the close of the year, made me eat that bitter bread of sorrow, and occasion, (what has been termed by a certain writer, whose name I do not at present recollect,)—"the most afflictive sight in nature"—the tears of the aged to flow !

In short, it was but too evident, that my troubles and my sorrows were not yet at an end ;—that, if the ARCH TEMPTER—and when he failed in his artifices *that way*,—ARCH TORMENTOR, of mankind,—had really been permitted by MY SUPREME BENEFACTOR—who permits "these ills to fall"

"For GRACIOUS ends, and wills that man should mourn—"

to exercise his malignant purposes on me, so far as to "*sift me as wheat*," as he requested permission to do unto Simon, in other respects,—but, only to save my life as in the case of Job,—he had only changed his mode and manner, but not, his determined system, of attack.

In this, again, however, I trust, he was foiled ; and, if he was actually bent on nothing short of my destruction, and driving me, in the anguish of despair, to "*curse God and die*," he must have found himself grievously out of his calculation, when he saw, that I was as determined on my part, to pursue a quite contrary course, and to BLESS God and LIVE. But to return.

So early as the time when I wrote my new Retrospect, which I see is dated the 18th of January, I observe that, notwithstanding these portentous omens had already made their appearance, more or less—although some of them were only to the extent of small specks, of rather uncourtly, or unseemly appearance, and but little, as yet, above the horizon,—yet,

in reference to some matters, which had taken place in course of the by-past year, I could not, but feel grateful, and had, even at that early period, begun to give expression to these emotions in such language as this—"This calls *again* aloud for gratitude; and for these unspeakable mercies, I again desire to lift up my soul in thankfulness to the adorable giver of all good, whose loving kindnesses have kept pace with the revolving moments of the by-past year."

But, as the spring advanced, it appears that I had commenced in earnest, making my preparations for giving a more substantial proof of my determination to "**BLESS GOD AND LIVE**," than the mere expression of my sentiments and my wishes, on a manuscript, that was meant to remain as a sealed letter, in regard to the public in general, or, as I shall say, to the world.

By a letter to my youngest son, who still continued in his situation at Edinburgh, of date the 7th April, I see that, after alluding to "the weak state I had recently been brought to, before I began to take barks and other medicine," I gave him the additional information, "I begin now to think, if I do not *now* get on with the 'Book of Nature laid open,' I never shall; and, on that account, am anxious that I get it as far forward as possible, this summer;"—hinting, at same time, that I had been able to make little progress with it of late,—which shows, that I had not only *been indisposed*, but fixes the time, viz., during that Indisposition in which I *had been doing a little*, and had now turned my thoughts seriously on *doing more*, in furtherance of what, I may perhaps well style **ONE** of the **BEST WORKS** of my life—being, as Gallen has expressed it, in the quotation at the commencement of the introductory chapter of my Popular Philosophy, (the new name I gave to my improved edition of the Book of Nature laid open,) of that description of treatises, which "compose one of the noblest and most acceptable hymns."\*

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\* This quotation is altogether so beautiful, that I cannot resist the inclination I feel, for again copying it.—It is to the following purport, and is stated exactly in the way, in which it is made to commence my popular philosophy.—"Such treatises," says GALEN, "as display the excellencies of the **GREAT CREATOR**, compose one of the noblest, and most acceptable hymns. To acquaint ourselves

I need scarcely repeat to my reader, that this had long been a contemplated, and a favourite object, with me,—and the time certainly, had at last, become favourable and fitting for carrying my intentions into execution,—when, notwithstanding the prevalence of other miseries, (and who can count upon, being ever, entirely exempt from them in this mortal state) I had been considerably relieved from the pressure, of what had so long borne me to the earth, and, found, in consequence, not only *more leisure*, but my mind in a better frame for the purpose, during an indisposition that seems to have overtaken me early in January, and which seems to have increased about the beginning of June, to such a degree, as to unfit me, for a time, for all further exertions.

The golden moments, that so opportunely then came in my way, it may readily be supposed, I would avail myself of, in my state of solitude; and I did so, to such a degree, that it might have become a question with me, whether I did not much retard my convalescence, by the excess, or severity of my employment,—were it not, that instead of suffering under, I have generally been accustomed, to consider myself rather as benefited by such exertions.

Be this as it may, I seem to have plied my hands well, and had made considerable progress in my preparations during these months of seclusion. And when I say, that not only were my day hours, but many of those that are usually spent under the influence of

“Tired nature’s sweet restorer, balmy sleep!”

devoted to the performance of my arduous task, so that the *average* of three hours and a half, might still be, as it had been before, and has often been since, considered as my allotted portion of time, for sleep; this may surprise my readers the more, when I remind them of what I must have endured, not so much from bodily, as from mental suffering, in

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with His *sublime perfections*, and point out to others, His *infinite power*, His *unerring wisdom*, and His *boundless benignity*,—this is a more substantial act of devotion, than to slay hecatombs of victims at his altar, or to kindle mountains of spices, into incense.”—How far, it is there, well appropriated and fitted for the place it occupies, will be best appreciated by those, who peruse what follows in that work.

those lonesome moments, when "the heart must have known its own bitterness." Indeed, I must confess, that I feel rather surprised that I should have been able to make any, even the smallest progress, with my task at such a time, and under such circumstances.

But it seems to have been ordained, in the wisdom of Providence, that a work which may well be said to have taken its rise from misfortune, (as I think has already been sufficiently demonstrated) should be nurtured, and brought forward, as it now was, amidst the whirlwind and the storm; and that, it should further, issue from the press, and be given to the world, as it afterwards was, under circumstances peculiarly distressing:—during, in fact, one of the most calamitous periods, ever witnessed, in the bookselling trade.\*

That the laborious task to which I had devoted myself, and which I expected one day, would become, in addition to a most pleasing and agreeable employment for the present, a lasting source of future profit in the way of business, was not the means of making me overlook, or neglect, any opportunity for furthering my other business concerns, we have the most undoubted proof, in the circumstance, that our few spring auctions were not neglected, but carried into effect, at the time we could most conveniently allot for the purpose, viz. the month of February,—which was judged soon enough for that short series, all that was deemed necessary at this season.†

And that besides, when I became rather alarmed, at not again hearing from my American correspondent, by the 27th of May, I was induced to write a letter of that date, to a person who had resided there for some time, and was a still greater stranger to me, expressing a wish, that he would

\* In confirmation of this, I have only to refer my readers to the great change that took place, to the worse, in the state of the country, and the peculiarly calamitous period, which the Bookselling trade, in particular, had to encounter, in that memorable year 1826, when this publication, was destined to issue from the press.

† The first of these, was at *Pencaitland*, on the 3d and 4th Feb.—*West Salton* 5, 6,—*Gladesmuir* 7,—*Aberlady* on the 9,—*Gullen* 10, 11,—*Dirleton* 12,—*Kingston* 13, and *Linton* on the 14th.

wait upon, and make certain inquiries at the other ;—which I am glad to be able to record, to the honour of that worthy man, he did to the full extent of my request—and sent me off the desired information, so far, as he appears to have been able to ascertain the various particulars, so soon as two days after the receipt of my letter ; which seems to have been long on its passage, but for which, this good man, (who afforded at least, one instance in his own person, that CONFIDENCE was not altogether an obsolete, or a word out of repute in America,) made some amends by his promptitude and attention.

His letter despatched on the 9th of August, reached me, just in time, (in consequence of its containing nothing satisfactory in regard to the most essential particular—another remittance—or any *immediate prospect* of a remittance—) to set us once more at work, in our preparations for another extensive winter auction campaign, as the best way, to enable us to get the better of the effects of “hope deferred,” from that quarter, and to make up for present deficiencies, till we saw, what time would produce.

Once more then, we buckled on our auction armour for an active campaign, which we commenced, I see, in *Haddington*, on Monday the 27th Sept. under the head of “**CHEAP SALE and AUCTION of BOOKS, FAMILY BIBLES, &c.** but which, was afterwards designated a little further down the advertisement, as “**A LITERARY TREAT,**” and which was continued with very little interruption, until we finished for the year, at *Whittingham*, on the 25th Dec.—or, I may say, after the interval of another month, by a sale at *Dunfermline*, from the 29th January to the 12th February, which, I consider it a better, or more fitting period, to bring these operations up to ;—as we did no more, in that way, until the ensuing season, for such sales,\*—and, upon the whole I have the sa-

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\* This extensive series of auctions embraced *Haddington*, week beginning 27th Sept. to 2d of Oct.—*Dunbar*, 4th Oct. to 9 —*Ecoles*, 12 to 14,—*Sproutston*, 15, 16,—*Stitchel*, 18,—*Hume*, 19,—*Greenlaw*, 20, 21,—*Litholm*, 22, 23, *Swinton*, 25, 26,—*Ladykirk* 27 —*Whitsome*, 28, 29,—*Paxton*, 30,—*Hutton*, Nov. 1,—*Allanton*, 2,—*West Rosten*, 3,—*Ayton*, 4, 5, 6,—*Coldingham*, 8, 9, 10,—*Dunfermline*, Nov. 13 to 20,—then, after *Dunbar Fair* week—*Tynningham*, 30, and Dec. 1st—*Linlithgow*, 2 to 4,—*Haddington* again, Dec. 6 to 18,—*Pencailand*, Dec. 20,—*Salton* 21, 22,—*Gifford*, 23, 24,—*Whittingham*, 25,—and again, at *Dunfermline*, Jan. 29 to Feb. 12.—all inclusive.

tisfaction to add, that the aggregate proceeds of these sales, were something considerable ; and must, I think, have come up to our expectations, a thing to which we had not been much accustomed of late, and which, could not, therefore fail, to contribute much to put me in spirits, as the year drew towards a close.

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## CHAPTER XXXIV.—1825.

Various causes that must have contributed to my composure, and to make me feel somewhat comfortable on entering 1825 —Although from certain circumstances slightly glanced at, it is evident the stream had not continued to run perfectly smooth.—It is well for the credibility of my narrative, that part of my story is passed over.—I am, however, enabled to proceed with my new task, and make some progress in it, during another protracted convalescence.—Another flower in life's journey.—Extract from the letter of a very old customer.—More subjects than one engage my attention.—Must ever look back with satisfaction, to a certain portion of my past hours.—One happy effect of my being so engaged.—Proceed in my preparations in respect to Popular Philosophy.—Much to do in that Summer and Autumn.—The back again, made meet for the burden —Recover my health, and get into excellent spirits.—Finish our little series of auctions.—The aspect of the times, becomes more and more favourable.—Happy party at a launching feast.—Issue my prospectus.—My great success in a short period.—The number of subscribers, continues to increase during the winter.—Suddenly interrupted in my preparations, by a piece of most afflictive intelligence.—More flowers in my path.—Renewed correspondence with some of my old acquaintances.—Specimen of the style of one of them.—Pay my long meditated visit of observation, to the Edinburgh College Museum.—Walk by the Cove Shore.—Visit the Siccar Point.—How to kill *three* dogs with *one* stone.—Expedition to the Fairy Castles to the westward of Oldhamstocks —Kind reception, pleasant party, and hospitable entertainment, at the manse —Reminded by the snow, that we had not been a day too soon.

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FROM the success of my auction sales, so far as they had gone, up to that period, (and it will be seen that they had arrived to very near their termination for the season)—together with the circumstance of my having made, in course of the year that had just passed, a good deal of progress in a work that had been, for some time, the object of my anxious solicitude, and which now, for more reasons than one, I wished to bring

into the market with the greatest possible expedition, I must have been somewhat restored to myself, and to decent composure of mind, at the commencement of 1825.

Notwithstanding, it appears too evident from my memorandums, that the unhappy cause which made me eat that bitter bread of sorrow towards the end of the preceding year, was by no means removed, and that the two other co-operating destroyers of my peace, at the time, still stood in abeyance, with a frowning aspect, as if impatient again to be called into action, to shower down their wrath, on my already too much shattered and battered tenement,—although nothing further must be said for the present on these heads.\*

Suffice it, therefore, now to say, that notwithstanding these grievous drawbacks to my comforts, and the many tantalizing and distressing circumstances, under which, I was compelled to proceed with and continue my task,—I actually did proceed with, and continue in the prosecution of it, during another protracted indisposition,—in the most persevering, zealous, and unremitting manner, in course of the early months of the year; and ceased not, till I had brought my plans for publication, as well as the work itself, to considerable maturity in course of the ensuing summer.

My indisposition, this season, indeed, seems to have set very early in, for in a letter from a friend of date, the 28th of December preceding, the expression, “I am exceedingly sorry to learn, that you are so unwell,” shews, that at that time, I had been complaining,—while the following, from a card before me, dated the 26th January, written by one, of my *oldest acquaintances and customers*, and who is pleased, indeed, in that card to compliment me pretty highly

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\* My readers, I trust, will excuse me, for ~~not~~ being less mystical and more explicit, on this part of my subject,—for, belonging to that class of my misfortunes, which must not be brought too prominently into the public gaze, and partly connected with the mysterious subject within the veil, they must, as in last chapter, be still suffered to remain enveloped in obscurity;—and, it is perhaps well for the credibility of my narrative, that it is so,—for if the *whole* truth were to be told, in regard to some of these particulars,—and other circumstances, that made their appearance in due time,—I much suspect, that my simple story, would lose much of the appearance of its simplicity, and my narrative wear, more of the air of a romance taken from the regions of fiction, than what, in that case it would have undoubtedly become, “A mysterious romance of real life.”



on the length of and uniform cordiality which had subsisted betwixt us, in all our dealings, "I was sorry to hear of your recent confinement," &c. shews that, that indisposition was of a nature sufficiently serious, to occasion confinement;\* and although, I must have had a temporary respite at the time I was enabled to walk out, and take my short excursion to the fields, on the 31st, or last day of the month, it is evident I must again have had a relapse in course of the month of February, as I recollect from a circumstance that I cannot easily forget, of going to bed on one of the nights of that month, with a blister on, in a state of pretty severe indisposition,—but to hail, the ensuing morning, with fear and trembling, instead of songs of joy for my recovery.

How long I continued in a state of confinement, or seriously indisposed, I know not, but I see by some memorandums, up to the 11th of April, that I had been a good deal busied with *one subject* of a less pleasant description, while the progress I had made with *another*, viz. my Popular Philosophy, demonstrates, that that part of my occupation, had suffered nothing by my confinement.

\* This worthy man, Mr James Inglis, late schoolmaster of Innerwick, had indeed, long had dealings with me,—as I see, I can count back 42 years, from the time his name first appears in my books, to the day of his interment, in the church-yard of that place, on the 30th of October, 1830,—and by the following extract from his card, above alluded to, it will be seen how he was affected to me, on the 26th Jan. 1825,—“To recognise an OLD ACQUAINTANCE and FRIEND, tends to stir up the finest recollections, and most pleasing feelings of the soul. My attachments to friends of the above description, are not easily shaken, especially where the intercourse I have with them, evinces that probity, honour, and obliging attention, which, without flattery, I have reason to say, have always marked your conduct, and when such engaging qualities combine in a character, they must have an attractive influence, upon every person possessed of a kindred spirit.—It is now, as you observe, many years since we became acquainted, and have had dealings in the way of business, and I rejoice to think that no misunderstanding has ever soured our friendly and cordial transactions.”

This may be thought to be too panegyric for insertion in this place, but let it be recollected, that I have been of late years, so much persecuted by Fortune, as to have nothing to leave, as a legacy to my family, but character,—and this will shew, how I stood in that respect, (within these few years,) with a VERY OLD CUSTOMER; who had indeed, had many transactions with me in his time, and having been known to the most of his acquaintances, as, although a very worthy, a very particular man in his way, and one, who would not from any consideration, have given such a verdict, without seeing occasion, is a species of evidence, not to be met with every day, and very much out of the common run,—for, *Forty two years*, is a long time for any two individuals to be acquainted, and much they must have known of each others characters in that time, especially, if they had *many* transactions together, which, it is evident, has been the case in this instance.

And *now*, after those days have so long passed away, I must candidly confess, that instead of saying any thing of an ungrateful or repining nature, on account of the time devoted to my favourite task, (with whatever regret I may reflect on the necessity that led to the other) I look back upon the happy moments spent in pursuits so pleasing, because so congenial to my feelings, with a composure, and inward serenity of mind, of which nothing earthly, has to this day, nor do I think ever will, be capable of robbing me.\*

In consequence of these unremitting endeavours, which I was so well enabled to carry into effect during the leisure afforded by my protracted convalescence, I was so far advanced in my preparations, by the end of summer, as to have begun to look seriously about me, as to the most proper time for issuing my prospectus to the public.†

Previously, however, to issuing my prospectus, there was one thing that seemed to demand my more immediate attention, and that for two reasons,—in the first place, our auction license would expire early in October,—and, I wished to avail myself of it, in getting over, before it expired, our few sales for the season ;—and secondly, in order to get my hands clear of one business, before I got involved with another, after the issuing of my prospectus, I deemed it proper, at any rate, that these sales should be gone about immediately.‡

\* There was attendant upon that employment, one advantage which I must not omit to mention, and for which, I shall never cease to be grateful, viz. that it seems *at the time*, to have drawn off my attention from those grievous reflections and harrowing considerations, which, without such diversion in their favour, might have prostrated my mind as well as my body, and been, indeed, in both these respects, TOO MUCH FOR ME.

† I had indeed, owing to a combination of untoward and unfortunate circumstances, connected with various subjects, which cannot even now be slightly touched on, much to do—much to engage at once my attention and anxiety during that summer and autumn, but it has often been remarked, that in the most trying cases, “the back is usually made meet for the burden,” and I certainly, to a great degree, experienced the truth of this saying, during the rotation of these few months.

Indeed, my strength seemed, at this period, to increase with my difficulties—and my health to enable me to push about, and spirits to support me under what many would have considered as most ungrateful tasks, had not, perhaps, for a length of time, been in such excellent condition as they were, during the latter months of this busy summer,—and I may add, during the whole of the still more, *to me*, busy, autumnal portion of the year.

‡ We accordingly find that my son, who had done nothing in that way from his finishing his course at *Dunfermline*, on the 12th February, as noticed towards the conclusion of my last chapter, commenced his few remaining operations

The coast being cleared, by the completion of these sales, and the times having assumed a much more promising appearance, than they had done for some time before, (I suppose I may say, since the sad calamity that befel our county in the spring of 1822,) I proceeded to put into execution my long formed, but often necessarily postponed, intention, in regard to issuing my prospectus, for what I now designated, “**POPULAR PHILOSOPHY; or, THE BOOK OF NATURE LAID OPEN, UPON CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES, and AGREEABLY TO THE LIGHTS OF MODERN SCIENCE, and THE PROGRESS OF NEW DISCOVERY,**” &c.\*

So early as the 3d of November, I observe, I had been making some inquiries, preparatory to a contemplated visit to the Edinburgh College Museum, previously to going to press with my work,—and, up to the 6th, was going on pretty comfortably with my other preparations and arrangements; but, on that day, I received such a piece of appalling, and I may well say, enervating intelligence, as drove, for the time, all other thoughts out of my head, and which, had it reached me a month sooner, or, before I had issued my prospectus, might have sealed up for ever, ere its publication had commenced, the fate of my book.

for the year (as we had resolved to discontinue the licence for the present) at Dunbar, on the evening of Monday, the 12th September, which he continued for that and the following week,—and afterwards, in some of the adjoining villages, until the licence expired on the 8th of October, when they terminated at East Barns,—after which, it was likely we had no more sales that way, till nearly the time when, my “*Popular Philosophy*” was finished at press, on the following year.—This short series, I see, consisted of the sales at *Dunbar*, on the two weeks ending the 17th and the 22d September.—*Linton*, 26th, 27th, 28th, do.—*Whitekirk*, 29th,—*Tymingham*, 30th and 1st October,—*Whittingham*, 3d, 4th,—*Stenton*, 5th,—*Inverwick*, 6th, 7th,—*East Barns*, 8th.

\* This I commenced doing, on Monday the 24th October, and by the morning of the 28th, the day on which my circular to the trade, is dated, I see, we had 80 names on our subscription papers—and of such a description, as might make any person proud of such a compliment, and such an acquisition,—although, the numbers were afterwards much increased in course of the winter; indeed, so much so, as to make it become indeed, a matter of profit, as well as of pleasure, if things could be economically gone about, to proceed with the work.

The matter I think, was at first broached, after dinner, to an intelligent young gentleman, one of the happy party, at a certain launching feast, which took place on the previous week; the recollection of which, while it calls up the remembrance of those more prosperous times to, the shipping interest, at same time, is accompanied by the most melancholy reminiscences,—as going to shew, or fix the time, when the funeral knell of that interest, at least in this quarter, may be said to have been sounded; as it does not appear, to have done much good, ever since.

I, however, must have, in some degree, recovered my spirits by the end of that month, in consequence of the number of orders, and some of them of a very flattering description, that continued to pour in from all quarters—more especially, as two of them, now before me, dated the 23d, was the commencement of, the reviving of a correspondence with, some of those excellent worthies of the earth, which it must be ever the pride of human nature, properly endowed, and rightly constituted, to correspond with.

The following kind letter, which arrived, among a number of others, from that much respected individual, whom I have before had occasion to mention, and whose signature it bears, I have deemed it proper to preserve in these pages, as a specimen, of the style of the writer, as well as of his readiness to serve me, on the present occasion :—

“ NEAR LONDON, 23d of 11th Month, 1825.

“ ESTEEMED FRIEND,

“ I am glad to find, that it is thy intention to publish, the *Book of Nature Laid Open*, upon Christian principles.—Our plans for teaching the poor to read, are making rapid progress, and it is of vast consequence to provide reading for them, which, while it conveys instruction, with respect to the things which are seen, and which are temporal, should give their minds a bias, towards the things which are not seen (by the natural eye,) but which are eternal, and of infinite importance —Pray, send me up a few of the printed prospectuses, and, in the meantime, put down the following subscribers :—

[Here follows a list of a few names, taking among them, to the extent of twenty-two copies of the book ; but the particulars I do not deem it necessary to repeat.]

—I remain, with best wishes for the success of thy work, thy sincere friend,  
(Signed) “ WM. ALLEN.

Addressed, “ George Miller, Editor of the *Book of Nature Laid Open*, Dunbar,—North Britain.” }

On the —— of December, I paid my long contemplated, and often wished for, visit to the Museum,\* in which I was met by my much esteemed friend, Mr ——, who may possibly recollect, upon these pages meeting his eye, something of my prediction about *meteorics*, which I had an opportunity of explaining to him, as I have done several of *my* mysterious subjects, upon *natural*, not supernatural principles, in the afternoon, when we met again at Newington to dinner.

On the following week, I think, on the Tuesday, I had the

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\* See, “A peep into the Edinburgh Museum,” or, the Edinburgh College Museum described, page 35 to 62, volume first, of my *Popular Philosophy*.

walk along by the Cove shore, as described in the 84th page of the first volume of my book ; and, on the 16th, being the day on which I met some friends, on the occasion of their annual dinner at Linkheads, I observe I had, in course of the forenoon, paid a visit to the Siccar Point, as described, page 85, &c.\*

My preparatory visits, however, did not end with those I have already mentioned ; for my good friend, Mr ———, being here during his Christmas holidays, I accepted his offer to treat *me* with a part of a chaise, so far as the road was practicable by such a conveyance, on the condition, which was readily granted on my part, that I would treat *him* with the pleasure of accompanying me, on my exploratory visit to the *Fairy Castles*, situated in the mountainous regions to the westward of Oldhamstocks,—and which I have also described at pages 92 and 173 vol. first, of my Popular Philosophy.

We set out accordingly, for that, to me, at the time, very interesting district, on the morning of Wednesday the 28th December, and, taking Oldhamstocks in our way, were there joined by my much esteemed friend, the Rev. Mr Moore, at the manse, to which we returned, after our toils for the day were over, and spent a most agreeable afternoon, in a most agreeable party, which our kind and hospitable friends had invited to meet, and to dine with us, on our return.

Our worthy host will possibly recollect, that **WE WERE NOT A DAY TOO SOON** for the purport of our journey, for the snow had begun to fall, before we left the village in the evening ; and had we been but a day later, I am afraid, the *Fairy Castles* would have remained under snow, although they were not *now* under ground, until it had been too late to discover them, for our present purpose.

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\* It has been sometimes remarked, that a person in doing so and so, has “killed two dogs with one stone,” but in this day’s transactions, it will be seen that, in that sense, I killed no less than *three*.—My visit to the Siccar point, was, no doubt the most important, in respect to the pursuit in which I was now so seriously engaged,—but the circumstance of the dinner, with such excellent friends, and in conformity to an old established practice, would most likely have called me eastward, on that day at any rate,—and, I had besides, an assignation with a person to meet me there, on very particular business, from Cockburnspath, before the coach came up ; and he was just, I think in time, to get all over, before the coach did come up to bear me home, from my day’s labours, and the pleasant meeting, whose company, I need not say, I could have with pleasure enjoyed much longer, had circumstances permitted.

## CHAPTER XXXV.—1826.

It is well for us that we cannot see into futurity, or the fate of my Popular Philosophy, might have been sealed, while in embryo —Discouraging obstacles I met with in the commencement —Inducements, to go forward.—The great engrossing subject with me in the beginning of 1826 —A specimen of “my night thoughts.”—Just in time to be useful.—Dedication of my work to THE GREAT UNSEEN WITHIN THE VEIL.—Proceed with it to press.—I am soon after assailed by a combination of distressing circumstances.—Deplorable reaction in the affairs of the country.—Great change in the short period of four months.—Summoned to Edinburgh, on a jury trial.—Embrace the opportunity to visit the Botanic Gardens.—Rather strange anomalies in a Court of Justice.—Part *first* of Popular Philosophy makes its appearance.—Encouraging and flattering testimonials very opportunely arrive.—Part *second* of my work comes out.—More flowers in my path, in the form of favourable notices.—Visit a friend in the west.—Embrace the opportunity of paying a second visit to the Botanic Garden on my return.—Great heat and forwardness of the season.—“ANIMATED FLOWERS,” attending Professor Graham’s noonday lectures.—My walk in the Botanic Garden, where described.—Visited by a young friend, who turns out in the end to be very useful.—I have a call from Dr Chalmers on his journey to the eastward.—Part *third* of P. P. appears, accompanied by a series of testimonials down to July.—Friendly advice of a friend, which, however, I am still unable to attend to.—No time for me yet to think of rest.—Part IV. of my publication makes its appearance.—Short series of sales for the winter.—Not tired of my employment during, although well pleased with the completion of, my task.—Quotation from Bishop Horne.—A small debt of gratitude paid to my young friend.—Pleasant party at Birnieknows on our return from the Cove-Shore, accompany my little coadjutor to Edinburgh.—Deliver him over to his father.—We afterwards lose sight of him, but learn that he had found his way to the College Museum.—More disagreeables.—Letter of condolence.—New trials, which, notwithstanding all its pleasing toils, contribute to make the year 1826, set in clouds.—Advertise my book as an appropriate Christmas, or New Years Gift.—Congratulatory and friendly communications received after the completion of the work.

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I TOOK occasion to remark in my last chapter, that if a certain piece of appalling intelligence had reached me, a very short time before it did, the fate of my book might have been sealed, ere it had commenced—or, in other words, the prospectus, might never have been published, and now, I may safely say, that could I have foreseen the consequences of those disastrous storms, which were already giving some indications of their approach, when I went to press, early in January, 1826—I might have still hesitated to advance, or trem-

bled on the threshold ; and had I seen, besides, those other portentous specks that severally made their appearance, at different intervals, above my horizon, developing themselves as the year advanced, until they at last appeared clothed in that malignant form of baneful influence, which could not fail, to shake the nerves, of one situated as I was too soon afterwards,—I certainly, after all my preparations and procedure, would have been disposed to shrink from the task, I had, in a moment of fancied security, now entered upon,—I may say, at once with cheerfulness and alacrity.

But, it is not for us to see into futurity ; and I never was one of those, who, having put my hand to the plough, thought of looking back, while there remained a possibility, or the shadow of a possibility, of getting forward. So, although a little note that I received, of date so early as the 4th, might have been considered as a kind of indication of what I had to expect from one quarter, and the howling of the growing storm, that afterwards made such dreadful havoc among those connected with the book trade, overthrowing among the rest, the long established, and supposed firmly cemented, firm of Messrs A. C. and Co., (the report of whose failure reached me a few days after,) gave me too much reason to fear, that I would have but a precarious prop to lean on, in another. Yet, as my dependence in this matter, had been chiefly placed on the effects of my own exertions, aided by those of private friends out of the trade, and as I had, by such means, already secured a most respectable, as well as numerous list of subscribers, I could by no means consider myself so much at the mercy of that hurricane, which seemed, in the first instance, to have marked the bookselling trade for its victims, and I consequently resolved to proceed with my publication, and ventured forward.

Nor, were my operations, in the prosecution, of what I must now call, for a time, my almost all-engrossing work, confined to my day hours ; they continued, as formerly, to be occasionally the burden of my night thoughts.\*

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\* As an anecdote illustrative of this, I would briefly notice, that the *second* four descriptive lines at the foot of the emblematical frontispiece for the first volume, was the mere effusion of an after thought, that came across my mind, during "the

Whatever were the causes of retarding, or preventing, the writing of my new Retrospect, this season, to the 5th of February, (and some of them, from certain expressions in it, seem to have been afflicting enough,) I see that I had not neglected, in that Retrospect, to dedicate my work, which, by that time, must have made some little progress at press, to "**THE GREAT UNSEEN, WITHIN THE VELL,**" WHOM, in allusion to the sights I saw in the Edinburgh Museum, I called "**THE MAKER of all those wondrous machines—THE WONDERFUL CONTRIVER of all these once mysterious movements,**"—but WHO, in reference to the relation in which HE stands to the greater temple of the universe, of which the Book of Nature treats generally, may, with equal propriety, be designated, "**THE GREAT REGULATOR of the machinery of creation—THE MIGHTY IMPELLER of those perpetual motions,**" which, at once astonish us by their celerity, and astound us, by the harmony of their, revolutions !

"HIMSELF, HOW WONDROUS THEN !"

and, in invoking, in imitation of MILTON, and other worthies,

silent watches of the night." It will be seen by looking into the 86th page of my first volume of Popular Philosophy, that I had been very forcibly struck with the appearance of a most beautiful rainbow, at the moment I had gained the summit of the hill, at the Siccar Point,—and that rainbow, seems to have made a more lasting impression on my mind, than is usually the effect, of such unsubstantial exhibitions of creative power.

For it must be observed, that not only on the wooden cut which ornamented the cover, but on the copperplate engraving above alluded to, the rainbow is introduced ; but when the proof of the copperplate was put into my hands on the evening of ———, there was indeed a rainbow, but not a word, in reference to that rainbow, was introduced : the lines at foot then were—

Where'er I cast my wand'ring eyes,  
To water, fire, or earth, or air ;  
A glorious theme before me lies,  
A God is everywhere !

And truly most excellent and appropriate lines, for such an engraving, they were, wherever they were taken or selected from ; but I was not satisfied—there was still something wanting about the RAINBOW. I therefore set my brains to work during the night, most likely after my first sleep, which was then, as it is now, seldom long, and by the time the proof was despatched to the engraver in the morning, I had added, as a continuation of the former lines, and what I may therefore style a specimen of my night composition :—

I see HIS bow set in the cloud !  
I see HIM in the showers that fall !  
Above—beneath—on every side,  
'Tis God !—is all—in all !

The propriety of which addition, and its adaptation to render the thing more complete, I leave the reader to judge.



the aid of that **HEAVENLY MUSE**, who, being well acquainted, through intuitive knowledge, with the various subjects treated of in the great Book of Nature—

“ This elder Scripture, writ by God’s own hand,”

can best inspire on such a theme !

At whatever period, in the month of January, I put the first sheet, or form, of my book to press, it so turned out, that I was not long to be permitted, to continue it, in that state of composure necessary, to carry forward such a work with the alterations I was now making, with comfort and satisfaction ; being too soon, alas ! disturbed by a combination of unhappy circumstances, and untoward events, which I have not room, even briefly, to enumerate for the present.\*

On the 14th of March, I see, I was summoned to Edinburgh, as a juryman ; and, as usual, embraced the opportunity of my journey for the accomplishment of more purposes than one ; and one, I see—and that a most important one to me, on the present occasion—was, to visit **THE BOTANIC GARDEN** ;—which I did, after the arrival of the coach, on the 13th, accompanied by my friend ———, to whom, I had written, to meet me for that purpose.

At the Garden, we were politely received, and kindly attended to, by Mr M’Nab, the very intelligent superintendent of the establishment, after presenting him with the introductory letter I had procured, as a peace-offering ; and I must just say, that that gentleman’s affability and communicative disposition, on this, and on an after, or after occasions, will not soon be forgotten.

On the morning of the 14th, I took my seat in the Court, and although I was not drawn, on what is called the short leet, and, consequently, became less involved in the business of the trials, yet I witnessed, *on that day*, what I shall never

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\* These were some of the deplorable effects of that dreadful reaction, which had taken place, in the commercial affairs of the country, during the short period, that had elapsed, since we were all so feelingly alive at what we then considered the permanently prosperous state of the country, at the assembling of so many happy faces, on the occasion of the launching treat I formerly alluded to, in October,—to the period, to which I have brought up my narrative, in the month of February following.—So much for the security of commercial enterprize, and the fulfilment of, what I may call, at that time pretty sanguine expectations,—or, too fondly indulged in, anticipations !

forget,—and what I thought, were rather strange anomalies, and, I presume, not often to be met with, in a court of justice, viz., a *quaker*, dressed in all the native simplicity of his sect, tried for an *assault*! And the trial of a man, who, I could not help thinking, had not been dealt with, exactly, as others have been, and used to be dealt with under circumstances somewhat similar, since and before the case of Dr Dodd,—in a matter of forgery.

I am inclined, however, in all such cases, to lean to the merciful side; and, as the reasons assigned by the judge for restricting the libel, must have been deemed satisfactory to the jury, who were impannelled on the occasion, far be it from me to make any reflections on the subject. Only, I, who had seen and witnessed several rather strange anomalies in my time, could not help, to set these down, among the number,—and to preserve, the very summonses, to prevent any mistake, in respect to time and other circumstances, on this head.

In course of the month of March, PART FIRST of my Popular Philosophy made its appearance; and, if my spirits about this time, were much depressed, in consequence of the operation of too many depressing causes, they must soon have been somewhat revived, and restored to a more healthy tone, in consequence of the receipt of some very encouraging, and rather flattering letters, which had very opportunely come to hand, in course of the month of April.

PART SECOND appeared at, or about, the time proposed, near the end of May, previously to which, some very favourable notices of its precursor had made their appearance, in the different journals of the day—which must have once more diffused over me their exhilarating effects, and contributed again to raise my now sadly depressed spirits.

In the month of June, I had occasion to visit a friend, to the westward, and embraced the opportunity, in returning by Edinburgh, of paying *another visit to THE BOTANIC GARDEN*, in company with, the very intelligent friend who accompanied me formerly.

It was a warm day, and, on account of the great heat, and, in consequence, the forwardness of that season, I believe the

vegetation had become rather too rapid for the professor, Dr GRAHAM, who was, at that time, busily engaged with his lectures, to WHAT, I have elsewhere alluded, (see my Popular Philosophy,) as “ animated flowers, of a fairer and more delicate form, whose intellectual culture does so much honour to the good sense of the present age.”—In order not to transgress on the limits I have assigned for this chapter, I must refer my readers, for, what I might have here said more on this subject, to my “ WALK IN THE BOTANIC GARDEN,” which will be found to form Chapter XXVIII, of my work above referred to.

After my return from this excursion, and in the month of July, I see that I was visited by a young friend, of no ordinary calibre in point of intellect, whose services, in the way of looking over revises, correcting proofs, &c., soon became so evidently useful, that it became a matter of some consequence, to keep him as long with us as possible ; and, as he appeared to be no way backward on his part, we contrived to do so, till the work was out of press.\*

It was in course of the month of July, I think, that I was favoured with a call from the Rev. Dr Chalmers, on his way to the eastward, and who, having occasion to pass that neighbourhood, although I could give him no hopes of being able to visit it, with the encumbrance of a gig, took along with him, that part of my work which described the Geological Alphabet, and other curiosities along the coast, by the Cove shore, &c. From some cause, at the time, I was prevented from accompanying the Reverend Doctor to the ruins of the *old* castle, which he visited ; but, by the time he came back, I made a shift to get ready to go with him, so far as our *new* church, from the steeple of which, he seemed much gratified by the sight of the surrounding scenery, which included the most striking objects, in East Lothian.

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\* The arrival of my young friend, would be the more opportune, as I see from one of my *notched trees*, that I had since my return from the westward, been in the hands of the doctor,—and now that I recollect it, the hot climates of Borneo, Sumatra, &c. to which I had been exposed in the stove houses of the Botanic garden,—and the almost intolerable exposure, on the top of the coach that day, did my health no good ;—and my recovery would not be the more accelerated, from sundry very disagreeable circumstances, which happened about, or soon after this time.

Shortly after, **PART THIRD** of my work, which was advertised to be published by the end of August, issued from the press, accompanied by testimonials, up to the end of July, which must indeed have been extremely gratifying; for, although the half of my little work only could have come under the scrutiny of the public, previously to that date, its praises, so far as it had then proceeded, may be said to have been sung,—by the *Inverness Courier*, in the north, and *Ackerman's Repository*, in the south—the *Caledonian Mercury*, and *Edinburgh Observer*, on the east, and the *Glasgow Mechanics' Magazine*, on the west side of Scotland;—and what rendered the encomiums contained in these testimonials, the more valuable was, that they were procured—honestly procured, as all my testimonials have been—the voluntary effusion of the most inflexible integrity, and uncompromising principle—without solicitation on my part.

About this time, or say, the 9th of October, I am reminded by a friend, “that now you have got the work almost to a close, you will, I trust, be able to take some ease to yourself, as it is surely needful.” That may be all very true, my friend; but it is not yet, a time for me to think of ease; for, when the book is out, there will remain still much to do in other respects, and in other matters connected with it. My literary labours, for the time, however, drew near a conclusion;—the month of November had arrived, the month which I intended should see the completion of them—and, as I see my last addition to the information contained in that work, is, in a supplementary note at the end of the index, dated November 1, 1826, I can have no doubt that **PART FOURTH** made its appearance early in the month.\*

Let it not be supposed, however, that I felt so very happy, on a termination to those labours, in which I had been so long employed. Indeed, had it not been from the circumstance, of the work's being finished, putting it now in my power to get in those accounts, which, by this time, I stood

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\* On Monday the 16th of October, I see, we commenced our short series of sales, for the season, in the town hall, *Dunbar*, which were continued for the week;—and at *Haddington* on the week following—where, I observe, we had also two nights on the 3d and 4th of November.

so much in need of, and enabling me to devote my attention to other necessary and useful purposes,—the mere finishing of my literary labours would have been any thing but a matter of rejoicing.

It was, indeed, upon the whole, one of the most pleasant and delightful tasks in which I ever was engaged, and were it not for the painful conflicts I had to endure, and the severe struggles I had to encounter, during the whole time, I may say, I was engaged in it, I would still look back upon the time spent in bringing out that work, as perhaps the most happy, as well as the best employed, period of my life; as it is, I still look back with regret to the causes that conspired so soon to put an end to such delightful labours:—where, I had an opportunity in the prosecution of my business, to walk daily with my GREAT CREATOR, in the garden of creation, and to hold converse with the bountiful source of all intellectual illumination, and intellectual enjoyment.\*

There was one little debt of gratitude that I owed, and which I lost no time in repaying, after issuing my last, or concluding part, from the press; I had promised my young but excellent coadjutor, the TREAT, after the book was finished, of a walk along the Cove Shore, &c.—and accordingly, accompanied by the same intelligent friend, who had accompanied me both in my last visit to the Edinburgh Museum, and on both occasions, to the Botanic Garden, we set out on the morning of the 7th of November, and after an amusing, and I trust, somewhat instructive ramble, along that part of the coast, we arrived at Birnieknows, where, we were kindly

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\* Indeed, I cannot help thinking, that in taking leave of these labours, and of that task, I must have felt and thought somewhat similar to the pious Bishop Horn, on taking leave of his task, the Commentary on the Psalms, "He arose," says the author himself, "fresh as the morning to his task; the silence of the night invited him to pursue it; and he can truly say, that food and rest, were not preferred before it." Happier hours than those which have been spent in these meditations on the Songs of Sion, he never expects to see in this world. They are gone! but they have left a relish and a fragrance upon the mind, and the remembrance of them is sweet."

Such was the language of the Bishop, in allusion to the completion of the task of his Commentary on the Psalms; and similar, it may be supposed, were the sentiments of the author of Popular Philosophy, on the completion of his work.

and hospitably entertained at dinner, by my worthy namesake, Mr George Miller, who had been long a tenant on that spot, although he has now left it, for Oldhamstock's Mains. Thus ending, our sea side *ramble* at the conclusion of my task,—as we did, the fairy castle *scramble* at the beginning of it,—in partaking of the hospitality of another old and kind friend, associated with another very pleasant party, although not so numerous as the former.\*

In the month of December, I observe, I was still troubled with certain disagreeables, and some of them were indeed so much so, as to make a friend who had had occasion to write me on the 21st of that month, and who had heard, or knew something of them, to remark, "You have indeed had much to try you, and indeed to view your case on the gloomy side, you may say 'that all these things are against you.'"

But it was only with a part of my trials that this friend had been made acquainted; there was now a *new* source of vexation opening up, or setting in, hard against me, that served to neutralize the exhilarating effects, which so many encouraging letters as I was now in the habit of receiving, were calculated to produce, and which, combined with other causes, to make the year 1826, notwithstanding all its pleasing toils, and these enchanting flowerets, set in clouds.†

\* My young friend was much amused, and no doubt highly gratified on that little expedition—by a sight of what I have recently alluded to, as "the Geological Alphabet," which is not to be met with in such perfection every where, and other curiosities on that interesting part of the coast,—and I think he was particularly delighted with some thing, that our obliging friend the blacksmith at Bilsdean smithy, took an opportunity of exhibiting to him on our return, and previously to our arriving at Birnieknows.

In a few days afterwards, I accompanied the young man to Edinburgh, where his father had come to meet him on his way homewards,—but there was one thing that he seems to have been determined to see, before he was welcomed again by his mother's smiles to *his own fire side*,—for, having lost sight of him for some time, during our stay in Edinburgh,—we afterwards learned, that he had found his way to, and had been amusing himself in—THE COLLEGE MUSEUM.

† The more is the pity, that I should have, at such a time, been so situated—for really, during the progress of my work, which, it will be seen, embraced almost the whole course of the year,—I had sufficient to vex me; and these little flowerets, as I called them, without such contrary operating causes, might have done something to restore my internal tranquillity.—Besides referring to the printed testimonials containing those I had received up to the 18th of October,—and which I published in 8 pages, with an advertisement of my book, recommending it as "*An appropriate Christmas, or New Years Gift*," I must have derived much comfort and gratification from others, which I had not as yet, had an opportunity of displaying in print,—from two of which, that have never been published, I make the following short extracts.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.—1827.

I am able to resume my long accustomed, but lately neglected, walk on the New Year's Day.—Melancholy reminiscences, with which the recollection of it, is attended.—A stranger on the beach.—Affecting extract from my new Retrospect.—Good news from a far country.—More flowers in the form of testimonials.—Literary gems worth preserving.—Delightful remembrances and incentives to gratitude.—More, and new causes of disquiet.—Another flower of exquisite fragrance.—My *last* series of country auctions.—A very appropriate question asked.—Print my full sheet of testimonials.—A brief enumeration of what I have designated, “a beautiful string of pearls.”—I am influenced by a very different motive, than that of vanity, in publishing these testimonials.—“The Book of Nature,” by Dr John Mason Good, noticed.—New canvassing experiment.—Once more out in my calculations.—My disappointment aggravated by the bad effects of the storm.—My son sets out, on his last journey on my account to the south.—Old Inn, pulling down, and sundry reminiscences connected with it.—Our situation at that time, not one of the most pleasant.—Midnight alarm.—More disappointments and disagreeables.—But some of them of that description, which belongs to the veiled subjects.—A sister's sacrifice, to a brother's comfort.—Soothing and praise-worthy conduct of an exemplary mother, which did not, even in this life, go without its reward.

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It would appear, that on the New Year's Day of 1827, I had been able to indulge myself in my long established, but of late years, too much *unaccustomed*, walk, by the sea shore; for I perfectly remember, having on that day, seen a stranger on the beach, the recollection of which, calls up melancholy associations, which cannot possibly let me mistake in respect

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From No. 1,—being from a very intelligent and learned clergyman, in our own neighbourhood,—I take—“I understand you have now brought your work to a conclusion, and I congratulate you on it,—for, though it is a work that reflects great honour on you, both as a philosopher and a christian, yet, it has been an effort of no small labour, on so many different subjects, and so ably and minutely handled in all of them.”

And from the second, being from one of the professors in the Edinburgh University, of date the 2d Dec. I take the following:—“I feel assured with you, that if in the ordinary course of education, the mind were turned to observe nature and to reflect on its observations, the amount of human happiness would be increased, and society rendered much more rational. In attempting to effect this purpose by the publication of Popular Philosophy, you have offered an acceptable service to the public.”

These are all I can here make room for, and there is the less matter, in regard to some of the others which might be received by the end of the year, but had not appeared by that time in print—as they so appeared afterwards, and must, in that shape have been seen by many of my present readers.

to the time, although these associations, and the recollections they call up, as belonging to the class, denominated "the veiled subjects," must be suppressed, or passed over at present; as also, for the same reason, the varied circumstances that contributed to render so unhappy my approaching BIRTH DAY, which fell on a Sunday, being the 14th of January, this year.

There can be no harm, however, in making a short extract, just to shew the exact nature of my situation—how in fact, I was affected—how I felt—and how I gave expression to my feelings on the occasion;—and I think I cannot do this better, than by confining myself, (and which will also, not take up much of the time of my reader,) to the few words with which I commence my twenty-sixth retrospect, which, I see, was written on that day. "I again write in the bitterness of my soul—this is my birth-day, but such a birth-day address, may I never again have occasion to make;"—these few words, few as they are, convey a true picture of my situation and feelings, at the time, I sat down to write that gloomy retrospect:—but as there is not a rose without its thorn, or the most cloudy weather without an occasional glimpse of sunshine, I see, that in the further prosecution of my task, I had occasion to notice, what, at the time, seemed to have been regarded by me as "a token for good," the receipt, on that day, of a piece of pleasing intelligence from a friend at a distance, from whom, I had not for some time heard, and which, on that account, I may call good news from a far country.

Indeed, without these occasional glimpses of sunshine, and fragrant flowerets, which were now, since the publication of my work, beginning to appear in so many directions, to cheer me on in my path, I do not see how, I could have much longer borne up—in midst of the numerous ills—the grievous disappointments—the harassing torments—which now began to beset, perplex, and to vex me.\*

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\* But, it is fortunate that the bane, in the adorable Providence of a merciful God is so often accompanied, by the antidote, and, I see that ere yet the evils of, this again eventful year, had time to be much felt, one of those choice antidotes which soon afterwards came into my hands, must have been in preparation for me:—the letter to which I allude, and in which, I am told among other gratifying things,



These precious flowerets, or literary gems, as some of them may very appropriately be styled, are well worth the preserving, on two accounts—not only as memorials, or delightful remembrances, of the complexion of the antidotes which were sent to my relief, and of the kind of persons by whom they were prepared and administered—but as perpetual incentives of gratitude to that Great Being, who sent, through so many independent, and unconnected mediums, so many choice cordials, to cheer, and bear me up, in midst of that otherwise unhospitable—may I not say, unbearable—gloom—such as must have overspread my mind, at the time I commenced the Retrospect above alluded to, on the 14th.\*

On the 1st of this month (February,) I see, what, I need not now call my Spring, but my *last*, series of country auctions commenced.†

But, having proceeded so far, I am almost inclined to ask myself the question, what has become of my bodily indisposition? For, if I had any remaining, I have no record of it before me, and yet, I do not think, that I have been wholly exempted from Winter or Spring complaints, for many years.

Perhaps, the Almighty, in compassion to the many causes of mental disquiet I was obliged to endure, and found it difficult enough to bear up under, at this particular period, was pleased, in mercy, to alleviate, or ease me altogether, of that part of my burden, for a season.

The little fragrant floweret, alluded to in my note, as being conveyed to me, in the letter from my friend, of date the 1st

by a most intelligent literary correspondent, “the concluding part (meaning of my work) sustains the full value of its precursors,” being dated on the first of January.

This letter, as well as some printed testimonials that had come to hand in the course of the last month of the year, is now before me, and from the manner in which they are secured, are not likely to fall aside.

\* In a letter from a friend dated the 1st of February, I have conveyed to me a pleasing flower of most fragrant smell, which, although of a complexion too delicate for further handling in this place, must have arrived very opportunely at the time it did; and so I merely record the circumstance, with sentiments of eternal gratitude to the Great Physician, who knew so well the consolations I stood in need of, at such a gloomy and depressing moment of my existence.

† This short series was commenced and continued,—at *Innerwick*, on the 1st and 2d of February;—at *East Barns*, on the 3d;—*Whittingham*, the 5th and 6th;—*Stenton*, 7th and 8th;—*Tynningham*, 9th and 10th;—and *Linton*, the 12th, 13th and 14th.

of February, seems to have been, but the precursor, of what were to follow; for, by the month of April following, they had arrived, or appeared in the papers, and other journals of the day, to such an amount, that I had been tempted to select extracts from them, to an extent, which formed, when collected, no fewer than 27 testimonials; and filled, when published, including the little preliminary matter, at the beginning, not less than a full sheet of post folio.\*

But, it must not be inferred, that, in this, I was actuated by a mere impulse of vanity. This was by no means an influential motive with me, on the present occasion; for, although, it must have been extremely gratifying for me to be able to bring forward such a host of respectable evidence in my favour, especially, as I most probably would have, by this time, made the discovery, that there was a race of giants, of legitimate birth, now mustering against me, in order to supplant, or rather, to supply the place of, the former pigmies, of more obscure origin, with whom, I had formerly to con-

\* No. I. of these testimonials, is from the *Caledonian Mercury*, of April 27, 1826.—No. II. from the *Inverness Courier*, of May 24, do.—No. III. from the *Edinburgh Observer*, of June 30, do.—No. IV. from *Ackerman's Repository of Arts, Literature, &c.* for July, do.—No. V. from the *Glasgow Mechanic's Magazine*, July 29, do.—No. VI. from *Caledonian Mercury*, 5th October, do.—No. VII. from *Edinburgh Star*, 14th October, do.—No. VIII. from *Inverness Courier*, 18th October, do.—No. IX. from *Edinburgh Observer*, 5th Dec. do.—and No. X. from *Caledonian Mercury* again, of December 25, do.—No. XI. is from the *Dumfries and Galloway Courier*, of Jan. 2d, 1827.—No. XII. from the *Ayr Advertiser*, or *West Country Journal*, January 25, do.—No. XIII. from the *Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle*, Jan. 31, do.—No. XIV. from the *Stirling Journal*, February 1st, do.—No. XV. from the *Rev. Dr Duncan Ruthwell*, the intelligent author of the *Cottage Fireside*.—No. XVI. from the accomplished author of *Intellectual Education, Popular Models, &c.*—No. XVII. from do. in *Ackerman's Repository of Arts, Literature, &c.* London, Dec. 1826.—No. XVIII. from the *Leeds Mercury*, March 3d, 1827.—No. XIX. from the *Inverness Courier*, March 7, do.—No. XX. from *Westmoreland Advertiser and Kendal Chronicle*, March 24, do.—No. XXI. from an eminent literary character, a minister of the Church of Scotland, dated Feb. 22d, do.—No. XXII. from the *Rev. James Thomson, one of the ministers of Dundee*, of date 5th March do.—No. XXIII. from the *Rev. John Brown, Minister of the Secession church, Whitburn*, date 13th March, do.—No. XXIV. from a worthy and learned gentleman, to do. in a P. S. of same date.—No. XXV. from the *Rev. Robert Burns of Paisley*, of date the 16th, do.—No. XXVI. from the *Rev. Dr Mavor*, dated Rectory, *Woodstock*, (near Oxford,) 29th March, do.—and No. XXVII. from the *Rev. Dr. Henry Belfrage, Falkirk*, of date the 9th of April, do.

This is a beautiful string of pearls, although, only containing such testimonials, as had come in, up to the last date.—It will be afterwards resumed, and a few more added to the number, as we advance.

tend with.\* Yet, I had another, and more substantial, end in view, than the mere gratification of any such impulse, by

\* It must be here remarked, that not long after I had announced my work in a complete state, and recommended it for the purposes already mentioned, I found my advertisements followed in the Scottish papers, by an announcement, which surprised me not a little indeed,—viz. “the Book of Nature,” by JOHN MASON GOOD, M. D.—A name which I had often heard of, but never coupled with any work bearing that title:—the circumstance of the book, being advertised in 3 volumes octavo, and at a no less price than *three times* the amount of my new and enlarged edition, is the cause of my denominating it as belonging to the race of the *giants*, while its London precursor of nearly the same name, I have thought fit to class among the race of *pigmies*, by way of contrast, and as occupying the place of the contrary extreme, both as to bulk and cost,—having been sold at just *one third* of my price.

Whatever motive may have induced Dr Good to encroach so much upon MY TITLE, for a work, which, with all its excellencies, and they are not few,—I cannot pretend to say;—but I was soon satisfied by getting a look of the work, from its respectable Edinburgh publisher, Mr Adam Black, that, I was right in my previous surmises, that there was something *wrong* in the matter.—In fact that, as is too much the practice in the present day, the title had been adopted, from whatever cause it had proceeded, for the work—and not the work, as has been my invariable practice, got up to suit the title.—Indeed, my greatest surprise still is, that any gentleman possessing ordinary powers of penetration, and discernment, of which, no one I believe ever considered Dr Good as deficient, could ever think, of giving to a book, which would have been very properly styled, “Lectures,” or, “A Series of Lectures, on Natural and Scientific Subjects, delivered at the Surry Institution,” the title of “the Book of Nature,” in its most comprehensive and indefinite sense,—which treats neither of the atmosphere and atmospheric phenomena,—which certainly may be denominated *ONE GREAT PAGE* IN THE BOOK OF NATURE—Or, of THAT MORE LUMINOUS PAGE that lies beyond “the atmosphere’s, intestine wars,”—and comprehending, the evolutions of all the cometary and planetary hosts,—and the dazzling beauties of the starry heavens.

So much indeed was I satisfied, that a man of Dr Good’s long standing, and high reputation in the literary world, could not be capable of such an act, call it, in the mildest sense, such a blunder,—that I suspected at once, that it was rather the effect of one of those *tricks of the trade*, by which a favourite title is sometimes adopted, without much consideration, as to how those may suffer by it, who alone possess the original claim; and in this opinion, I was rather confirmed, by observing in the Memoirs of Doctor Good recently published, from the pen of his friend, Dr OLINTHUS GARGOXY, that about, or previously to the time, the work under the above title issued from the press in 1826, he had been a good deal in a complaining way, which would render it, the less likely, that he should attend to such concerns.

In order, however, that I might get at the bottom of the matter, in this particular, before putting my present work to press, which would require me, in my own vindication, to notice the circumstance, and so that I might, be enabled to do all manner of justice, to a character which had long stood high in my own estimation, I deemed it advisable, to correspond with his Biographer, while these pages were yet in a state of preparation for the press,—mentioning distinctly the points upon which I wished information, and stating my reasons and motives for so doing.

To my letter, Dr Olinthus Gregory, his very respectable and learned biographer, had the goodness to send the following prompt and polite answer, which, although it contained, to use the words of the writer, “no *decisive* information on the subject” of my inquiries, yet goes to establish the facts, that I was not far

the publication of these testimonials, in such a form, and to the truth of which, the preliminary matter to these testimonials, bears ample evidence.

The fact is, that having finished the reprinting of some portions of the work which had become scarce, I had now a considerable number of complete sets, or perfect copies, to dispose of; and, as my deficiencies and short-comings, from so many concurrent causes, had been, in consequence of the unhappy turn taken in the affairs of the country, and which, had been rather severely felt of late, I formed the resolution of making a new attempt at canvassing, in order to get the remainder of my copies subscribed for: and I could scarcely, I think, have sent out the young man, who, in fact, was the same that I employed, with such happy effect, on the former occasion—better armed for the warfare, or fitted, for the new mission he was to be sent on, than by being accompanied on his rounds with such a number, or, as I see I call them, in my preliminary address to the gentlemen upon whom he was to wait, “such a host of powerful auxiliaries,” as the very flattering encomiums he carried along with him.

wrong in my surmises that the title was an *afterthought*, come from whom it might, and that, there were other people, and among the number, the learned doctor himself, who thought as I did in regard to its inappropriateness to the book. But having established these points, I shall leave the reader to draw his own conclusions, leaving the letter otherwise, to speak for itself.

“ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH, 27th February, 1833.

“SIR,—In reply to your letter, which reached me yesterday, I am sorry to say that I can give you no *decisive* information on the subject of your inquiries. From what I knew of Dr Good, I should think he was one of the last men who would filch from another the idea of a title to a book. Whether or not he ever saw any of the advertisements respecting “The Book of Nature laid open,” to which you refer, I cannot say: the probability I think is, that he did not; because, in my judgment, the very *sight* of your title, would have led him to seek another for his own work.—All his friends, including his bookseller, disapproved of the title which he actually adopted, as vague and inappropriate: and I am quite of opinion that if he had lived to publish a new edition of his work, he would have given it some other title more expressive of its nature and objects.

Pray excuse this brief and hasty reply; as I am now, and have been for some weeks, in a state of health which makes writing very irksome to me.—I am, SIR, your faithful Servant,

(Signed) “OLINTHUS GREGORY.

Addressed “Mr George Miller, late Bookseller, }  
Dunbar, North Britain.” }

But here, alas ! my bad luck, if I may use the expression, once more came across my path, at a very critical juncture ; and, if I had forgotten, that the same cause which contributed so much to render this new exertion necessary, on my part, viz., *the still greater restriction that had recently taken place in the transactions of the Banks*, must operate to my detriment, all over the country—I say, if I had forgotten this circumstance, at the moment the young man entered upon his work, I had sufficient reason to come to the recollection of it, both before, and after, his labours came to a termination :—the *want of money* was now the prevailing complaint ; and, after making a few trials, in which I became completely tired with, and vexed out of the business, I declined making any further attempts, in the prosecution of a plan, which, in better times, and at a more convenient season, might have cleared my hand of all my extra copies, and done me much good, by converting them in my necessities, into a more available article. This was the more distressing, as, from the almost unprecedented continuance of the late stormy weather, business had been much interrupted, and our supplies, of course, had come slowly in, which made me the less prepared for sundry obligations, as they came round, and rendered it necessary for me to apply to a friend, whose answer, of the 7th of May, seems to have had a very depressing, if not injurious, effect on my spirits.

But these were not, the only evils of the month of May ; for that month seems to have been particularly distinguished by a concurrence of troublesome, or untoward events. It, however, passed away ; and so early in June as the 12th, I see my son W., who had so long been my useful auxiliary, and faithful coadjutor, set out on that journey for me, to the south, which I think was the *last*, or among the last, business journies, he performed on my account ; having now entered upon a separate concern, in the line of business, for himself, in contemplation of his approaching marriage, which took place in the month of August following : and I need scarcely add, that he had, and must ever have, my best wishes that every thing which is good may attend him, for the filial part he acted, on so many important and trying occasions, while

in my service,—for which, I trust, he will suffer nothing, in the estimation of his best friends and customers ; while the testimony of an approving conscience, will, be his *everlasting* and *never-failing* reward.\*

By a letter I received, of date the 19th June, I find disappointment on disappointment was still the order of the day ; and towards the end of this, and during the continuance of the following month, I had my share of other disagreeables, which in this place, however require to be passed over, for reasons similar to some formerly mentioned.

But there was one thing that occurred, early in August, which must not be passed over without notice, because it tends to the honour of one of my own family, who has not, I believe, been yet brought forward in course of my narrative, viz., that of my daughter, who had gone so far west, for a purpose that would rather have led to THE HOUSE OF FEASTING than of MOURNING, but who, relinquished the intention of going further, and remained in Edinburgh with her youngest brother, upon finding, on her arrival there, that he was confined, in rather a dangerous state of illness, although excellently lodged and most kindly attended to, in the house of a friend, and with the benefit of the best medical advice.

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\* I see by my memorandums, or as I have elsewhere denominated them *notched trees* in the wilderness, that on the day previous to my son setting out, being our sacramental Monday, the commencement of the pulling down of the old St George and St Andrew Inn adjoining, in order to make room for that new and elegant fabric which is built on its site, took place ;—during the progress of which, and of building the new fabric, we had, from our proximity, more than one serious alarm,—although all the persuasion of a kind neighbour could not induce us to leave, what I considered *our post* at the time, and from which, I could not be prevailed upon to remove, although particularly pressed to do so, on one very memorable alarming occasion. The month of June and also the month of July, when the risk was the greatest, passed over without any accident, although there was one night, in the latter month, in which we were a good deal alarmed by what we considered the falling in of some part of the building on our house ; but it turned out afterwards, that we were, I mean such of us as had heard the noise, more afraid, or alarmed, than hurt ; for the noise (which indeed seems to have been heard far enough) had proceeded from the falling down of some loose materials, inside, and had made the louder report, by falling on, the wooden supporters of the landing place, in our stair-case ; where, I believe, as they gave us afterwards no disturbance, they still remain.

For that sacrifice to a brother's comfort, I trust she also will have the lasting testimony of an approving conscience ;— and for the trouble, and pains, and anxiety, displayed on that mournful occasion, by my amiable, (and, on this account, if it were possible, more than ever endeared,) partner, in order to have the afflicted youth made as comfortable as possible, and at last removed, under her own eye, to his home, with ourselves, I have no doubt that she received a most satisfactory recompense, in the gratitude he manifested, and the affecting manner in which he expressed himself afterwards— when he emitted, what may be called, his dying declaration on his death-bed,—as will be seen in due time.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.—1827 (CONTINUED.)

The troubles and griefs of September commence early and advance rapidly.—

Retire early to rest on the evening of the 22d.—An unwelcome intruder on two accounts.—Commencement of a new series of grievous sorrows.—My troubles increase.—Timely appearance of a pleasant little floweret.—It reminds me that I have yet *one* consolation to fly to.—Another month of dreadful and anxious suspense passes.—Sad alternative to which I am once more reduced.—Again call a meeting.—Results of the abstract, &c.—My present deficiencies, how most satisfactorily accounted for.—Operating causes which prevented them from being to a greater extent.—Lamentable consideration, after other eight years persevering and unremitting industry.—Melancholy and afflictive details, extracted from my address on this unhappy occasion.—Kind and soothing usage I again experienced.—My subsequent conduct, or the procedure I adopted after the meeting—Friendly manner in which I was received by the absentees.—Congratulatory letter from my principal creditor.—The many disagreeables I had to submit to, speedily neutralized or counteracted by the reception I met with, on my journey to the westward.—Another blustering hero fallen !—Certain reminiscences connected with that afflictive period.—Consolatory advice, and comfortable assurance in a letter from an old friend, dated the last day of the year.

THE troubles and griefs of September, (and they were neither few nor small,) began to overtake me, at a very early stage of the month. So early as the 2d, I see I had a note from a certain quarter, that gave me a good deal of concern ;

but this was followed by another, of a worse description, on the 8th, and how many, of a worse description still, followed, during the remainder of that—the next—and following month, I shall not, (for, it would only go to harrow up feelings I would rather wish to lie dormant,)—now pretend to say ;—suffice it to observe, that, by the beginning of the month of December, they had assumed a complexion, which, in connexion with other matters, rendered them no longer supportable,—as will soon be seen by the event.

Meantime, although my son Robert, had got so far well, as to be able to return to Edinburgh, previously to the 19th, I find, by his letter, of that date, that my valuable partner, who had no doubt taken much trouble and fatigue with him, during his illness, had been seriously indisposed, in her turn ; and, certainly, before the lapse of a few days more, I had not my own troubles to seek.\*

Alas ! alas ! these were to me the commencement of a *new series* of troubles, which made me bleed at every pore with mental anguish, ere they were brought to a termination,—and which, in fact, ended not, until they had brought me to the brink of despair !†

\* It was on Saturday evening, the 22d of the month, I observe that I retired to my bed at an early hour, in consequence of indisposition, in which the mind had its full proportion, by reason of a very distressing circumstance which had occurred on that evening—or rather memorable night—when, we were doomed to have our rest broken in upon, and our slumbers disturbed (for, as for my part, I had slept none) by a very, on that occasion, unwelcome intruder, although no person could have been more welcome, under other circumstances, and on some other occasion, than that young man, would have been.

But for the present, he was most unwelcome, on two accounts, first, for disturbing us so unseasonably, as just, when my partner, who had not yet quite recovered from her late indisposition, had fallen into a state of repose :—and secondly, for the appalling and distressing intelligence of which he was the bearer—viz. that his mother, a near connexion of ours, of whose indisposition, we had heard no accounts when I lay down—had died suddenly !—We were neither of us, however, in a condition to rise at the time, and being satisfied that we could be of little use otherwise, we deferred our attentions to the afflicted family till next day, when, they were not awaiting so far as they could be of service.

† What I experienced,—what I felt,—and what I suffered, in consequence of the opening up of the flood gates, of this new source of troubles upon me,—with others of older origin—during that, and the subsequent months of October and November,—I have not room, nor, if I had, would I have fortitude, or inclination, now to mention ;—it appears however, that, by the beginning of, or early in the month of November, my feelings had been severely lacerated, and I was still smarting under the anguish of some recent intelligence, for I seem to have re-



The last day of November came ; but, still, it brought no encouragement, no comfort, for me. On the evening of that day, I wrote a pretty long letter, but not more so than the case required, requiring *immediate* information respecting certain matters, in which my affairs were deeply implicated. This would reach the person to whom it was addressed, on Saturday the 1st of December. The answer which I received to this letter, was far from being satisfactory ; and, by the time the writer himself appeared personally, to give me further information, in respect to his intentions, I had yielded to the impulse of despair,—and resolved to call,—*once more*,—a meeting of my creditors ;—which I did, by the following circular, dated the 6th :—

“SIR,—I am extremely sorry to intimate, that, after one of the most severe struggles, that ever, perhaps, fell to the lot of a poor mortal, in such UNPRECEDENTED BAD times, as we have recently witnessed, in order to get the better of FORMER MISFORTUNES, I have been compelled to give up the contest, in consequence of, a series of losses and disappointments of the most vexatious and astounding description, experienced under circumstances depressing and heart-rending in the extreme, and now crowned by such a calamity, as has left me no other alternative, but the unhappy one of calling a meeting of my creditors, on Saturday the 16th current, in the GEORGE INN, HADDINGTON, at which, your presence is earnestly requested ; in order to, take into consideration a state of my affairs, with the circumstances that have more *remotely* and *immediately* led to such an unfortunate result ; and after being satisfied from my statements, how far I am deserving of your commiseration and sympathy—giving your concurrence and sanction, to such measures, as may be deemed most advisable for the general good. I remain,” &c.

The meeting which took place, at the time and place appointed, was rendered the more peculiarly affecting, in consequence of a circumstance that occurred about the

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joiced, that a pleasing little floweret, sent me by post, in form of a card, dated the 31st October, had been put into my hands, on the 4th November, just in time to console me a little, after the sufferings I had endured, by the intelligence I had received during the short space of the *three intervening days* : I mean between the receipt, and the date, of this little comforter, which concludes in the following manner :—“How consoling must be your reflections, dear Sir, in having dedicated your life, to the most important services to the cause which ——— with impotent presumption has assailed in vain. May your life be spared to benefit your fellow beings, prays your very sincere friend,” &c.—Among the three pieces of disagreeable intelligence that I received in course of these three days, I observe one is the confirmation of my son’s *increasing illness*,—the others, I forbear to mention,—but, coming upon me so thick, they could not fail to have a very injurious effect ; and it would appear, made me hug, for the moment, the little remembrancer which so kindly, and so opportunely, reminded me that I had at least still *one* source of consolation remaining, to which I might fly in my cogitations !—and time it was—for it appears that before I received that note, the gloom of despair was fast settling down upon me, and other fountains of refuge appeared, in rapid succession, to be drying up.

same time, and with which, indeed, it was partly connected; viz., the sending out of my circulars, at the precise time when some of them must have fallen into the hands of my again poor invalid son, at the moment of his preparations to come out, and *take up his LAST earthly abode* with us.

At the meeting, certain statements were laid before the gentlemen assembled, accompanied by a narrative, in form of an address, which could not fail to throw every necessary light upon the subject, although I have not room at present for either the one or the other;—in regard to the latter, however, there is the less matter, as, I dare say, my readers have had enough of documents of that kind already;—and as to the former, the subjoined information, founded on my abstract, will give a tolerable idea.\*

The few annexed extracts, from the original address now before me, being all that I can make room for, will convey some idea of the nature of my argument, and the way I was affected on that lamentable occasion, in which, for want of other honourable insignia, I might have well assumed the initials, M. S. A. G., as an addition to my name;—from the manner I was brought to express myself, by the time I had reached the last paragraph: in which, the interpretation of these few letters, so full of meaning, is to be found.†

\* From the abstract thus alluded to, it distinctly appears that my debts, at that time amounted to L.3067 : 0 : 9; while the assets, or funds to meet this sum total with, was only to the extent of L.1270 : 3 : 8.

The deficiencies, however, which were enumerated in the abstract, were most satisfactorily accounted for, and referred to, in the course of narrative,—and were found principally to have been occasioned by further losses in the disposal of stock,—books rendered imperfect, by the long continued badness of the times, preventing the people completing them,—other losses by bad debts—the great expense of bringing so many unsalable articles, at so unpropitious a period to market, &c. &c. altogether to the amount of L.2300,—being upwards of L500 more than was necessary to square accounts, and make the two ends meet, had no such disastrous losses taken place—and which, can only be accounted for on the supposition, that otherwise, instead of going back, we had been getting forward again in the world, and that, had it not been for Mrs M.'s exertions at the back of the counter and my own, with my Popular Philosophy, matters would have been still worse.—It was certainly, however, a lamentable consideration at our time of life, to see, again, the fruits of other eight years eight months, hard earned earnings, all swept away in the general wreck.

† In course of my narrative, at one part, I have occasion to proceed.—“What, with the long continued depression of the times, and one thing and another, I believe, my losses on the disposal of the L.1400 worth of stock, which was marked

I need hardly say, that such a statement as I produced, accompanied by a narrative, written in such a spirit, was met, on the part of the creditors,—with the utmost sympathy,—the kindest usage,—and, the most speedy compliance, on their parts,—with whatever terms of settlement I might be disposed to accede to. Indeed, I left them to adjust and settle the terms themselves, while I retired to another room, to be out of the way of their deliberations. It was in that situation, Mr —

off to be sold by auction, was even considerably more than I have calculated in the second item of L.300 more—the other losses, L.140 and L.237, can easily be explained to gentlemen conversant in the book business.—Finding the auction business also failing, or, carried on in such a protracted shape at a distance, as must add considerably to the expence, as well as risk (as I had now learned by dear bought experience,) I determined to call home my northern auctioneer, and to confine my operations *nearer home*, which, although not likely to be sufficiently productive, would, I thought, enable me to carry through with a little more assistance from friends, without sacrificing so much of my stock, as I found had been the case of late, and which would enable me to get quit of my obligations to them the better, now that my instalments were all paid up”—alas! how much was I again mistaken!—For now commenced the calamities of *EAST LOTHIAN*, and Berwickshire, the very places I had marked out as the theatre of my future operations.

[I need not here repeat, the great originating cause of these calamities, and of our having in consequence, been obliged to carry our sales in the ensuing winter, into Forfarshire,—nor have I room to pursue this part of the subject further.]

A little further on, in allusion to the particular period, I had selected for bringing out my Popular Philosophy, I take occasion to observe, “Before I had yet time to carry my intentions into execution, the storm began to gather,—and, before I had advanced many paces in my task,—it burst, with fearful impetuosity, and most destructive influence upon the Book trade,” &c. &c.

And, as I approach towards the conclusion, I remark, “what may be your opinions, Gentlemen, of the propriety, or impropriety, of *MY CONDUCT*, one thing is clear, that, if it had not been for Mrs M.’s exertions in the shop, while my attention was so much taken up with other considerations, in order to make the best of, what some would have deemed a hopeless cause, long ago, very little if any thing had been left,—and I may say, and say truly, that it was *THIS HOME*,—the hope of being able, one day to get the better of difficulties, *arising, as every one must see, now, out of former misfortunes*, by our united and protracted exertions, that made me persevere so long,—although sometimes almost against hope.”

[But here comes the last paragraph, which seems to point out one of those mournful occasions, I so affectingly alluded to, at the time, I penned the last page but one, of my series of introductory chapters, (See page 95 of the present volume.)]

“I might have said more—a great deal more—to shew you, that in this most eventful period of my life—upon which so *MUCH DEPENDED*—and upon which my future fate and comfort may be said to have hung,—I might have been well styled, ‘*A MAN OF SORROWS AND ACQUAINTED WITH GRIEFS*,’ in *the truest sense of the word*;—but I shall, for the present, draw a veil over the melancholy picture, trusting, that I have said enough to meet your sympathy, even if my conduct, should not altogether, meet your approbations:—up to the last moment of *HOPE*, I persevered—when *HOPE* expired, what could I do, but give way to despair?”

found me, I dare say, the picture of despair, or something approaching to it, when he came to inform me of the determination of the creditors, or what they rather had the goodness to submit to me as reasonable. I agreed to the terms—returned again to the company,—and, as securities, I think, were found on the spot,—the matter may be said to have been so far settled.

To complete the thing, however, I, with the advice of a gentleman, who had acted again, as he had often done before, a very friendly part, on this distressing occasion, went westward on the Tuesday following, to Edinburgh and Leith, to get the assent of the absentees in that quarter ; and I shall never forget the readiness, with a very trifling exception, with which my request was complied with, and the great kindness I experienced in that otherwise disagreeable journey. Indeed, my kind friends,—for I must ever call them so—seem to have vied with each other in paying me every soothing attention, under my new reverses, and some of them even went so far as to congratulate me on my happy determination to go west *personally* ; and, if ever any person experienced the truth of the adage—“ If you wish to have your business done, *go*—if not, *send*,” I think I did, on that occasion.

It is the less to be wondered at, then, that the kind friend, who had taken such an active hand in the matter, and who advised me so strenuously to go west *personally*, when my spirits began to flag and I hesitated in coming to the resolution, on the afternoon of the 15th, should, when the result of my journey had been communicated to him, have congratulated me so warmly on my success, in his letter of the 22d, at which, he said, he was “ most happy.”

The many disagreeable calls I had to make, about Edinburgh and Leith, on the 18th and 19th, will still, occasionally, flit across my mind ; but the disagreeableness of the call was, in general, soon neutralized by the kindness of the reception ; and if *one* person assumed the blustering attitude—which he might have spared on the occasion—that person, has now become, more the object of my pity than my anger, in consequence of the information I have recently received, that, that

person, who *then* blustered his hour,—has been,—or now is,—in the back ground himself.

There are a number of little associations connected with my gloomy journey to Haddington, on the dark morning of the 15th, which I have not yet forgotten—the very circumstance of the clock not striking at the hour of starting—the information we received from a gentleman who came in at Bail Gate, and his strange surmises after he joined our party—the conversation I had with ——— previous to the meeting,—are all fresh in my memory ;—while others of more paramount interest, but which, at present, it would be painful even thus briefly to glance at, make it somewhat difficult, to suppress the rising sigh, when I think of them.

Things seem to have gone on progressively towards the completion of the settlement, from my return from Edinburgh, till the end of the year ; for, on the 28th, I see, I was able to forward to my friendly coadjutor, so recently alluded to, the deeds of accession, of other two of the few houses, from which we had not yet finally heard ;—and on the 31st, or last day of the year, in a letter in answer, and containing some necessary information, he gives me the following consolatory advice :—“ *Get on with your arrangements, and keep up your spirits, for, I have no doubt, that a more comfortable and successful period is at hand for you, than you have experienced for many years back.*”

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.—1828.

No reason to doubt the sincerity of my friend's sentiments, nor his ability and inclination to serve me so far as lay in his power.—Pleasing cogitations to which such considerations must have given rise.—Another flower, or rather the crowning piece of a new chaplet.—Enumeration of the several flowers that composed this new bouquet.—Opinion of the Rev. Ebenezer Brown of Inverkeithing written on New Year's Day.—Another perplexing consideration engages my attention.—New evidence of the sincerity and good intentions of my friend.—Comparative calmness and serenity of mind in which I write my new retrospect.—Yet something ominous in the unaccountable motto.—Another kind letter from my old friend.—And another of a most consolatory and gratifying description, largely quoted.—A person cannot feel *too sensitively* on such occasions.—Go to the westward again in good spirits, and am again most cordially and kindly received.—The *first* fore-taste of another *very* bitter cup, in a state of preparation for me.—Issue my February sale catalogue.—Sales at Edinburgh.—Auction of remnants, &c.—Disagreeables of the month of April.—The month of May not without its full share of them.—Bad effects of procrastinated suffering.—I become a living barometer.—Letter of condolence to an old correspondent in consequence of a recent afflictive bereavement.—Arrival of a little stranger into these sublunary regions.—My observation on the occasion.—Pleasing but affecting extract from the answer of an old and much valued correspondent.—A visit of mercy very opportunely chosen.—Death-bed conversation on a sacramental Sabbath.—My son Robert's only regret in dying.—Go to the westward on a cheerless journey, and on a *cheerless* subject.—Visit in July, Edinburgh and Dalkeith, rendered memorable by the affecting reminiscence of *THREE LAST THINGS*.—Timely present of "the farewell to time," for being perused on a death bed.

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THAT my friend thought as he said, and said as he thought, I had no reason to doubt,—and how could I? He had *long* been my steady and unflinching friend, and that on many an important and trying occasion. In the late instance, as presides of the meeting, to which he had been appointed, as my highest creditor, he took a most active part towards getting matters speedily arranged; and, in the very letter from which the extract is taken, which concludes my last chapter, he gave sufficient evidence of his exertions to be of service to me still.

And, as I had no reason to suspect the sincerity of a gentleman, whom I could not tax with having ever manifested any intention to deceive me, in any former instance; so I could

not doubt, from *former experience*, his ability, as well as inclination, to be of use to me on this now exceedingly depressing and distressing situation. I knew well, that he had much in *his power*, towards promoting, or forwarding me to the very state, he had so feelingly and kindly predicted, and it was not long until he gave me a very convincing proof to this effect.

The year, therefore, so far as Mr ——— was concerned, must have gone down in peaceful serenity, not unmixed, perhaps, with the pleasing anticipations of what I might yet expect from *his aid*, in the unfortunate condition in which I was again, after so many unremitting efforts, to the contrary, unfortunately placed; and these, indeed, might have formed part of the most pleasant of my cogitations, when I sallied forth, to take my accustomed sea-side walk, on that beautiful sunny afternoon, of the first day of January, 1828.

The comfortable expressions, in that letter, must indeed have constituted *it* a flower, to cheer my path, as I sauntered leisurely along on its southern banks, near the mouth of the great estuary of the Forth,—while, at a considerable distance up, and in the neighbourhood of its northern shores, there had been preparing, on that very day, perhaps that very hour, unknown to me, a flower of a different kind, and destined to become the crowning one, to A NEW CHAPLET, which had been for some time forming.\*

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\* This refers to the letter of that venerable and exemplary minister of the Secession Church, the Rev. Ebenezer Brown of Inverkeithing, who, in writing to a neighbouring bookseller of that date, ordering a copy of the book, is thus pleased to express himself,—“ I wish to have another copy of *Popular Philosophy*, to make a new year's gift of it to some young persons. To me it appears to be an *excellent* book. A thought occurred this morning—say that a person was sitting in his chamber—Mr Miller's book in his left hand—and the Bible, the best of all books, in his right—the former shewing him “ That all God's works praise him,” and the latter, informing him, that the God of nature is the God of grace—and that the God of providence is the *REDEEMER* of sinners—and suppose this person to be under the influence of the Holy Spirit, how happy would he be! Would he not feel, in some degree, as John the apostle did, when he ‘ heard every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, saying, Blessing and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.’ Which it will be seen in my next set of printed testimonials, beginning with No. XXVIII. forms the last, or concluding one, No. XXXV.—This set, containing those I had received up to that date, since the time I published my full sheet, formerly alluded to, is as follows:

But all these pleasing flowers were necessary, *or soon after* became necessary, to dispel the gloom which had already begun, or was too soon, alas ! to begin, to settle down upon me, from causes, the baneful effects of which, my own exertions could do little to extricate me, and over which, the influence of my friend, I soon found, had but little control.—Yes ! all these flowers, *timeously* as most of them had made their appearance, and others that afterwards followed in their train, became all necessary in their several turns, to cheer that path which I too soon found, was beset with briars of a most pricking nature, and interspersed with many a grievous thorn !\*

So early as the 5th of January, I have another kind and consolatory letter from my friend, in which, indeed, he not only gives abundant evidence of the sincerity of his formerly expressed anticipations and wishes, but goes a step further, by mentioning the name of another gentleman, with whom he had, at the time, considerable influence, and who, in a certain way, he seemed to think, could be of much use to me ; and as things went on progressively afterwards, much to my satisfaction, it is no way surprising, that by the time I came to pen my next retrospect, which I see is dated the 20th of January, I should take occasion to allude in one part, to “the comparative calmness which I now enjoy ;” and yet there is something so particularly ominous in the motto, of which I had so unaccountably made choice, at the time, and under

No. XXVIII. from the *Berwick Advertiser*, for 5th May, 1827.—No. XXIX. from the *Newcastle Magazine*, for Aug. do.—No. XXX. from the *Evangelical Magazine*, (London) for Sept. do.—No. XXXI. from *Louden's Gardner's Magazine*, for Nov. do.—No. XXXII. from *Inverness Courier*, 11th June, 1828.—No. XXXIII. from the *Imperial Magazine*, for August, 1828.—No. XXXIV. being the extract of a letter, from a *Minister of the Secession in the north*, to a friend, who had put into his hands for his opinion, a copy of *Popular Philosophy*, of date 16th May, 1827,—which brings matters down, in that respect, till No. XXXV. as above, from the *Rev. E. Brown* ; which serves, as before observed, as the crowning one of the whole,—and extends, the “beautiful string of pearls,” as it is called in the note at page 315, to a greater length.

\* Even before I had returned from my walk, on that early, or first born day of the year, I had found it necessary to change the subject of my reflections, and to turn my thoughts to a thorny, gloomy, and perplexing subject, for I believe part of the arrangements were digested, during my return from that walk, which were afterwards attempted to be acted upon, with my willing coadjutors, members of my own family, including the stranger, whom I had observed on the beach, on the last New Year's Day, who was still at home in a state of indisposition, from



such circumstances, that I cannot yet forbear being surprised at it.\*

For, from whatever cause, or impulse, the motto proceeded, it turned out in the end to have been, a very appropriate, as well as, in reference to what was to happen, although unconsciously to me at the time, a truly prophetic one; for there were indeed, evils forthcoming, of which I could then have no conception, and which, therefore, accounts for the state of comparative calmness I enjoyed, and which it is not likely would be disturbed, by the kind letter I received from my friend, of the 25th, in which he says,—“As to ——— if I have one ——— better than another, such shall always be at your service,” &c.—and that of the 26th, in answer to the one I sent accompanying my composition bills, which I shall give more at large, and indeed with very little abridgment.

“ ——— 26th January, 1828.—DEAR SIR, I have got your favor of yesterday, enclosing your composition bills, and I have signed your discharge.—I cannot, however, allow the settlement of this unfortunate transaction to pass over, without expressing my disappointment and deep regret, that your exertions, conjoined with the unwearied industry of Mrs Miller, and your family, had not experienced a very different and more satisfactory result; but this, I am *now* satisfied was impossible, from the extensive and ruinous book trade, in which you have been involved, during a period of unexampled depression—but this being happily got over, I entertain not the slightest doubt, that your integrity and industry will meet their due reward—and EVERY THING IN MY POWER, shall be done to forward your wishes and success: And with unaltered regard, I am,” &c.

This is A PRECIOUS GEM, as furnishing at once the estimation in which I yet stood in the eyes of my *highest* creditor—his kind and unaltered disposition to serve me to the utmost of his power—and what *was most gratifying of all*, HIS CONVICTION, that to do more than I had done was IMPOSSIBLE;—for I still had very sensitive feelings on this point, and would have felt keenly had the least surmise been thrown out, that

which he was doomed never to recover, and who, poor man, now that he saw that I was indeed again “a stricken deer,” seemed to vie with the others, in order to ease me a little from one part of my burden,—although it is much to be lamented, that all our united exertions, although apparently attended with a momentary success, lost in time their effect, and as belonging to the class of the veiled subjects, must be here left to repose in silence.

\* I can indeed, assign no adequate reason, or in fact any reason at all, for my having adopted such a motto at that time,—for I must not, I presume, in these days, refer it to a prophetic impulse, that I was compelled, or induced to say, “*The cup which my Father has given me to drink—shall I not drink it,*” for such are the words,—and yet, to what,—as portraying a state, to which I was

I might have made a better finish of the business, than I had been able to do.\*

In consequence of this gratifying letter, I think, I must have gone to the westward a few days afterwards, in good spirits; which would fall nothing, in consequence of the kind reception I again received, from my good friends in that quarter, when I waited upon them with their composition bills also, and got their several signatures to the discharge.

But there was one circumstance occurred on that journey, which *I can never forget*, and which, indeed, required all the kind and soothing usage I had experienced, to prepare me for, and put me in condition to bear it. For it was during my absence on this journey, that my eyes were opened to a new and appalling source of grief, or, rather, shall I say, that I received the *first* fore-taste of that bitter, bitter draught, which I have since had so much reason to believe, had been *too long* in a state of preparation for me, although I had no previous conception of the circumstance.

Although my book stock was now reduced to a very limited extent, I still had a small surplus to dispose of, and to get

again fast hastening,—but of which, at the time, I could have no possible conception,—could I, or can I still refer it?

So far indeed, from suspecting any thing of the kind, as the being soon obliged, to taste, what for a too long series of time, has since become a bitter ingredient in my cup,—that I see, I considered it in that retrospect, as one reason among others, why I should be grateful to the Giver of all good, that I had received but the night previous to the time of my writing, a degree of comfort, and consolation, beyond what, I could have a few days before possibly anticipated,—from the very cause, which so soon afterwards, became so poignant and lasting a source of grief.

\* I know that it is the opinion of some people, indeed it is only recently that I have been told so, that I have betrayed *too much* sensitiveness, or *felt too keenly, on these matters*; but this I consider as impossible, as to be *too honest*, in one's endeavouring to do the utmost with, a stock generously left to his disposal, for the interest of his creditors.

If it could be said, however, that I felt too keenly, in the different states of severe depression to which I have been reduced, I ought to be the more pitied, for *then*, the trial must have been the greater; as, according to Seneca, “it were no virtue to bear calamities, if we did not feel them;” and feel them most acutely I did, in all the instances, I believe, in which I have been so afflicted. So that, if any person suffers himself to fall into embarrassments that he can possibly avoid, he will not have the ~~task~~ with which I bore my misfortunes, to plead, as an apology—for bread and water, accompanied otherwise, with the most homely and simple fare—would have been luxuries to me, to what I experienced, in the midst of so much harassing anxiety, to accomplish what, after so much toil and severe struggling, I was, after all, unable to accomplish.

this done, as soon as possible, I commenced a sale from a catalogue, at reduced prices, on the 6th of February ; and in the mean time, had sent a small portion of the more unsaleable part of my stock, to be disposed of by ——— in Edinburgh.\*

That I suffered much from *certain disagreeables* in the month of April, is too evident, from a number of notes and memorandums still in my possession, while I am also reminded, from certain enquiries and other matters respecting my poor invalid son, that HE, was far indeed, from being in the way of mending.

The month of May again set in in clouds, and before its termination, I had much to add to my uneasiness—much to vex me—and while my son was giving daily indications, that he was hastening onwards, to that bourne from whence the traveller does not return,—and my faithful partner was almost sinking under her night watchings and attentions to him, in addition to her daily toils—the long protracted course of affliction to which I had been exposed, from one cause or another, was now beginning, or had previously begun, to tell fearfully upon my constitution, and that compound of flesh and bones, which I once almost thought nothing could injure, had become, as I termed it, in writing to a friend,—“ *too much of A LIVING BAROMETER.*”

That I must have felt acutely, with so many open and secret, causes of grief, operating upon me at the same time, with the recollection of my recent great misfortune, still, to a certain degree, preying on my mind, may be readily supposed ; and in a letter of condolence I wrote on the 10th of May, to one of my old and much esteemed literary correspondents, on the lamented death of a near relative, I seem to have taken

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\* This sale beginning on Monday the 4th, and ending Saturday the 9th of February, produced little, but the disappointment was the less, as from it, no great things were expected —On the 13th March, I see, I intimated what I called “ The Auction of Remnants,” from my late catalogue, which commenced with a rather singular attempt, in this place,—a *mid-day SALE*, in the Town-hall—on Thursday the 20th March, at 12 o'clock noon ; and was continued, with what success I do not distinctly recollect, on a few of the evenings following.

some notice of my *own* sufferings, as will appear in the extracts I shall take the liberty to make from the answer.\*

It was evident, from the answer to this letter of May 10, which I observe is dated on the 5th June, that, at the time I wrote my letter, but a few days before the little stranger alluded to in my note, came into the world, I had, although no doubt, writhing under the rod when I wrote, not given way to any expression of murmuring in that letter, or the amiable and benevolent writer of the answer, would not have paid me such a compliment—a compliment indeed so much beyond my deserts,—in the following affectionate paragraph:—

“I am indeed much affected by the manner in which you mention your distresses, though uninformed of their specific cause. But the pious resignation, the Christian submission, apparent in every line, affords honourable testimony, that the “*Essay on the Benefits of Affliction*,” in the Cheap Magazine, emanated not less from the heart, than from the intellect of the writer. I trust it may impress mine with due efficacy; and so far as I can judge of myself, I never have repined under the dispensations of unerring wisdom. I have grieved—grieved too much—yet I hope, no rebellious impatience debased my sorrows; and I acknowledge, with profound gratitude, the blessings that remain to me.”

I am sorry that my now contracted limits do not admit of a larger extract, but what I have inserted, I trust, will have the more weight, and be the more thought of, when I say, that such is the pious, resigned, and submissive language of the intelligent and highly accomplished authoress of *Intellectual Education*, &c.

On Saturday, the 7th of June, I see it was, that a near connexion, arrived, on his visit of mercy to see my son ROBERT, who was, by this time, getting weaker and weaker every day,—and this Saturday being the one before our sacrament, his arrival, happened very opportunely, to relieve my partner on

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\* At the time I wrote that letter, I could not indeed be otherwise than in a very depressed, as well as agitated state of mind—and as *yet, far removed from that comfortable period contemplated by my friend*, when he wrote his letter on the last day of December,—and in this state, it may be added, my *little grandson* GEORGE, found me, when he arrived in these, to me now somewhat inhospitable regions, on the evening of the 13th,—when, upon receiving information that the *little stranger* was born, I welcomed him with the cold and repulsive observation,—“He has come into a bad world;” which, to say the least of it,—for, gratitude for mercies received, was never a matter of indifference to me in my calmer moments,—and from the hold the little fellow soon afterwards took, and still retains of my, as well as of all our affections, it is evident that, my little *namesake*, was any thing but an unwelcome guest.

the forenoon of the following day,—and bear, the poor languishing sufferer company in her absence,—and it was only, indeed, upon these conditions, that my constant and ever willing companion to church, when we were able and circumstances permitted us to attend it, was allowed to accompany me to the house of prayer on that day.\*

Our kind friend took his departure—beginning of the following week—and I followed him, I observe, some miles to the westward,—on a cheerless and heartless errand,—on the last day of it.—The occasion of my journey with some other disagreeables, which occurred towards the end of the month, I must, however, here pass over in silence.

On the 4th and 5th July, I see, I paid that visit to my friends in Edinburgh and Dalkeith, which has been rendered affectingly memorable—by no fewer than *three* affecting circumstances.—It was on this occasion, that I saw, accidentally my friend Mr ———, as I passed through Edinburgh, for the *last* time ;—It was, on this occasion, that I paid (alas ! little did I think so at the time,) my *last* visit to—my *early* acquaintance—my long respected—much esteemed—and highly endeared, friend,—Mr PETER LYLE, late bookseller in Dalkeith; who died suddenly, at the time I was busied with my Retrospections in September 1831—and, it was on this journey, in

\* The conversation that took place betwixt the dear suffering youth, and his kind and sympathizing friend, during our short absence, as afterwards reported to us, WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN, as evincing, at once, the resignation of the Christian to his now apparently rapidly approaching *fête*—and the grateful sense he entertained on that trying occasion, which Dr Young calls “a detector of the heart,” of the kind offices and unwearied attentions paid him, *by her*, who on those returning seasons of the day of rest, and when relieved from the toils of the shop, would seldom quit her mournful post of observation by the bed side, and would most undoubtedly, not have been absent, even for the short time of a few hours, on this day, notwithstanding the solemnity of the occasion, had her place, not been so providentially supplied with such a substitute.

I have no room left for the interesting conversation that took place during our absence, but one sentence must not be forgotten ;—for while it rivets my partner, if possible, more firmly in my affections—it embalms the remembrance, of that early prey to the last enemy, more strongly in my memory :—“ I KNOW THAT I AM DYING,” said the dear youth to his friend, “ *but the only thing that I regret is, that I am not to live to do something for (or make some amends to) my mother, for what she has done for me.*” Poor Robert ! this was quite enough—you had become sensible of, and grateful for, what *that kind mother* had done for you—you expressed yourself to that effect—this abundantly shews there was no want of the WILL—and I trust, in the country to which you were fast hastening, THAT WILL, *would be accepted FOR THE DEED!*

returning by Edinburgh, that my good friend Mr George Boyd, of the house of Messrs O. and B. presented me with his *last* gift, as I shall call it, in allusion to the title—**THE FAREWELL TO TIME.** A work which, I think, had then just issued from the press of these respectable publishers, and came most opportunely to hand, for the comfort of our afflicted sufferer; who seemed to the last, to be much attached to it, and to this day, I believe, it bears some of his marks at particular passages.

### CHAPTER XXXIX.—1828 (CONTINUED.)

A refreshing *Oases* in the midst of the desert.—A *Rose of Sharon*, in a valley of brambles.—A *Plensing retreat* from the storms and buffetings of time.—The *Shadow of a great rock* in a weary land.—*One notched tree in the wilderness*, attended by the most delightful associations.—*One most grateful remembrancer* in the journey of life.—**TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF A MOST HAPPY MARRIAGE.**—How I employed my pen, and otherwise conducted myself on the occasion.—Appropriate mottos prefixed to appropriate lines.—A pleasant subject **AT LAST**, to dwell on.—And why should I not?—Pages sacred to the memory of female worth.—The Countess Alberti.—Lady of A. H. Rowan; Esq.—Madame Lavelette.—The wives of Barry, the Painter,—and Solomon Gesner, the German Bookseller.—**MY OWN WIFE.**—HER unremitting attention, and valuable services.—HER praises recorded by other pens, and celebrated by other tongues than mine.—A slight allusion to a death-bed testimony, formerly briefly noticed.—Testimony of a neighbouring clergyman, who well knew HER worth.—Another flower belonging to the same chaplet, to be afterwards noticed.—How the conduct of my partner has operated on, and been appreciated by myself.—Note in my Popular Philosophy, recommended to the attention of a certain description of readers.—A recent evidence, that conjugal affection, is not altogether confined to the female side.—The old man who obtained his wish.—Beautiful extract, from THOMSON, &c.

THE *last* was a sore chapter, but would have been much more painful to the reader's feelings, had there not been some things which I slightly hinted at, and others, that I passed altogether over in silence—and the *next*, will be found full enough, of matter of mournful and melancholy import.

The present may therefore, considering the way in which my thoughts have been occupied for some time, and the gloomy prospects still before me, be regarded as A REFRESHING

OASES *in the midst of an inhospitable desert*,—as a beautiful and fragrant ROSE OF SHARON, lifting its head *in a valley almost choked up, and occupied exclusively with thorns and brambles*;—as a place of PLEASING RETREAT from the storms and tempests, and bustles and other buffetings of time,—or, in the sublime and expressive language of Scripture, as the “SHADOW OF A GREAT ROCK *in a weary land*.”

The fact is, we had now arrived at one of those *notched trees* in the wilderness, that put us in mind of a more comfortable period of our existence, and along with it, brought many pleasing things to our remembrance,—I allude to the TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY of *our deeply chequered*, but, on the whole, *most happy* MARRIAGE, which happened this year, on the 11th of July, and which my beloved partner affectionately reminded me of two days before, mistaking as both of us did, the 9th for the day; a circumstance which, however trifling, it may otherwise appear, abundantly shews, that the time had run *too smoothly*, or *too roughly*, for us taking notice of the returning anniversaries, as they had of late come round, of so happy an event,—until the striking facts stared us in the face, that we had been now married *for a quarter of a century*—while, the time had passed, some how or other, in such a manner, that we had almost perceived it not!

I accordingly, set myself to work, to weave for my partner, the BEST and most acceptable CHAPLET I thought I could present to her on the occasion, and which I did, in what I called LINES ADDRESSED TO MY DEAR HELEN.

These lines I put into her hands, with a preamble setting forth, that *that day*, i.e. the 9th of July, 1828, had been considered as the *twenty-fifth anniversary* of our marriage;—justly observing, “for, in midst of toils, and trials of no ordinary description,—in midst of troubles and difficulties of the most appalling and perplexing nature,—and, in midst of afflictions and calamities the most excruciating and overwhelming,—such has been the result of OUR HAPPY UNION, that TIME, has rolled on for the protracted period of *a quarter of a century*, almost imperceptibly, or at least, without our being sensible of its *exact* advances;—being at a loss on the above morning, to make up

our minds, as to whether it was on the 9th or the 10th day of the month, that this our TWENTY-FIFTH anniversary came round,—while it will be seen, by what I have above mentioned, that it was neither on the one or the other !

This preamble, or a preamble to that effect, I followed up with the three mottos adhibited to the lines,—and these, in their turn, were followed by the lines themselves.—But in the first place, I shall quote the mottos.

“ And Jacob served seven years for Rachel ; and they seemed with him *but* a few days, for the love he had to her.” Gen. xxix. 20.

“ Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain ; *but* a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.” Prov. xxxi. 30.

“ Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.” Matth. xxvi. 13, and Mark xiv. 9.

Now came THE LINES, consisting in all of xiv. verses, the number of which, it will be observed, I have here abridged, beginning at the ivth,—for the same reason, that I have made it a point generally in these pages, to suppress others of my poetical effusions, viz. the conviction that I am no great adept in the business ; and how could it be expected that I should be so, who has, enough to do, to find leisure, to put my language into plain prose, without any attempts at poesy.

I hope these, however, will be excused, on account of the sacredness of the occasion, and as conveying, however they may fall short on the score of poetical merit, in plain and intelligible, although in strong and energetic language, the genuine sentiments and feelings of my heart on that memorable occasion ; and which evidence so fully, how sensible I was of the *preciousness* of the *boon*, and the *valuableness* of the *gift*, which an indulgent Providence had bestowed upon me, in this dear partner of my fortunes, whether prosperous or adverse ;—and that *SHE*, had indeed fallen nothing in my estimation, but the contrary,—from being the tried associate in so many trials—the approved and proved solace, in so long a train of protracted griefs.



## FROM LINES ADDRESSED TO

MY DEAR HELEN,

On the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of our Marriage.

Ah ! could I say,—for thy dear sake, my love !  
 These years had flow'd, in one pure placid stream,  
 Calm, and unruffled, as the joys above !  
 But why indulge, in this vain—foolish dream ?

For, then, the trial had not been complete,—  
 Nor had I known, the value of my prize !  
*Adversity's the test*—when it we meet,  
 False friends forsake—*assum'd affection, flies.*

'Tis when the rugged path, is strewed with thorns,  
 'Tis when the crazy bark's by tempest tost,  
 'Tis when affliction lowers—or frowns—in storms,  
 And daring courage, trembles at his post ;—

And *griefs*, and *sorrows*, wring the *aching heart*,  
 And *mental anguish*, racks the tortured soul,  
 When *man* sinks down—smote by affliction's dart,  
 And prostrate drains, misfortune's bitter bowl,—

That *love* shines forth,—in all its native beauty,—  
*Affection*, proves itself, indeed, sincere ;  
 And *true regard*—and soft *connubial duty*,—  
 Develop themselves to be—a *heavenly pair*.

Let us not fret then, though life's ills assail !  
 But bow submissive, to God's blessed will,  
 Trusting *his* loving kindness, *will not fail* ;—  
*Who*, can, with ease, bring good, from seeming ill.

And make our short afflictions here, below,  
 Pregnant with future scenes of lasting joy ;  
 Such joy, as nothing earthly can bestow,—  
 Where *cares* perplex not—nor life's *griefs* annoy !

And bless that kind—that fond indulgent power,  
 Who even, while here, where clouds surround his throne,  
 And dark'ning providences—often lower !  
 While despair whispers—we are left alone,—

Forsakes us not ;—but sweetens still our cup,  
 With grains of comfort, suited to our case,  
 And gives us *strength to bear*—or *bears us up*,—  
 By the soul-strengthening cordials of his grace.

While *Faith* points upwards to the realms on high,  
 And *Hope, sweet Hope*, descending from above,  
 Conspire,—as earth's last mournful scene draws nigh,  
 To prove harbingers of our Father's love !

By *whisp'ring*,—that, when all these toils are past,  
 And we're safe landed on yon happy shore,—  
 IN GOD'S BLESSED PRESENCE,—*we shall meet at last*,—  
*No more to part* :—THERE DWELL FOR EVERMORE !

There may have been a few alterations made in transcribing, but they are very trifling, and the sense and spirit of the composition is the same ; from which, and the manner I have expressed myself in giving vent to my feelings, it will be seen, that I had *at last* got—A PLEASING SUBJECT TO DWELL ON.

And why should I not ? For, if it is recorded to the praise of SOBIESKO, who is otherwise represented as a tender and affectionate husband, that, during the memorable campaign (the deliverance of Vienna in 1683) he wrote *daily* to his wife, and that “ at the age of 54 he had lost nothing of the kindness and enthusiasm of his early years.” Why might not I, who had witnessed, the endearing and affectionate conduct of my amiable help-mate, for a length of time, so much exceeding that spent on this memorable siege,—not indulge myself, at the age of 57, in an attempt which, without laying the smallest claim to pre-eminence, in the little display it afforded to my versifying powers, proves so incontrovertibly, that, at that more advanced age,—I also, had lost nothing of the *tenderness and enthusiasm of my early years*.

Let others sing then the praises of the COUNTESS ALBERTI, who, in my own words, p. 217, vol. 1st of my Popular Philosophy, “ when every effort to procure her husband’s pardon had failed, chose rather to accompany him, to those hopeless regions of premature interment, (the mines of Idria) and to share his miseries in a living tomb, than to be separated from him.—Of the PRINCESS VOLSKONSKY, who, in spite of the remonstrances of her friends, and the threat held out of depriving her of her titles and estates, if she attempted to join her husband, in the mines of Siberia, set out and reached her husband, nobly determining to be the companion of his chains and misery.—Of the HEROIC LADY OF ARCHIBALD HAMILTON ROWAN, Esq. in Ireland,—and of MADAME LAVELETTE, in more recent times, in France,—each of whom, effected the escape of her husband from certain destruction, by substituting her own person in his place.—Of the self-devotedness of THE WIFE OF BARRY the painter, in order to promote her husband’s happiness, through all his caprices or freaks of temper.—Or, of the unremitting assiduity and eagerness to assist her husband, as far as she was capable, in every branch of his profession, of, THE WIFE OF SOLOMON GESNER, the

German bookseller, (though better known in the world as the author of that little favourite of the public, "The Death of Abel,") in order that he might have the more leisure to devote to his favourite propensity, the pursuits of literature—(all of whose praises, however, deserve well to be taken on record.) I will content myself in recording those of MY OWN DEAR, FAITHFUL, AND AFFECTIONATE PARTNER, than whom, a more valuable help-mate—a more patient, uncomplaining, and indefatigable assistant in business, and otherwise,—was never, in mercy, given by a kind Providence to mortal man.\*

But her praises, it must have been observed, have proceeded from other pens than mine. So far back as the year 1816, it may be recollected *what* a gentleman said in his letter, on being made acquainted with our first great, and what I may now call, the beginning of our other misfortunes. In the letter of my friend of the 26th January, and quoted so largely in my last chapter, the services of Mrs M. it will be observed, are not overlooked. The friend with whom the affecting conversation took place on the Sacramental Sunday, designates her, in a letter written to me, some little time before that conversation, (so much to her honour took place) as SHE whose care, had been so assiduous to my son, in his illness.

While the following extract from the letter of a worthy neighbouring clergyman, who had more than once visited us in our affliction, and who had been *long* and *intimate*—

\* Indeed, without such an invaluable assistant as I have had, and nobody could know her value more in this respect than I did, it is most likely, that, with all the aid I have from time to time received from so many sources, few of my lucubrations would have seen the light; for there must have been time for copying out during the day, what was composed during the night watches:—and that time, and that leisure, it is well known in the circle of our more immediate neighbourhood, I could never have commanded, without such an excellent and unflinching substitute in my place. Even now, while I am engaged in writing these pages (although removed to a small distance to be within call, if wanted,) my useful coadjutor is at her post at the back of the counter, little thinking, I dare say, what is the subject of this day's theme,—and which most likely, she will not be aware of, till she sees it in print! for she makes no enquiries, either as to the particulars of my subject, or its exact progress: It is sufficient for her that she knows I have undertaken a task, which, although arduous, she is well aware had become necessary for the purposes intended:—her utmost curiosity, therefore, is, to know that it is progressing,—and her greatest anxiety, to relieve me from other concerns, as much as possible,—until that task is accomplished.

ly acquainted with the different members of the family, although a little out of place in point of time, may also, be brought well in here, as a testimony to her worth, so far as it respected that dear departed youth, to whose memory, that good gentleman had paid a most honourable tribute, in a sermon which he preached in our parish church, in the absence of our own minister, who had exchanged with him on the first Sunday after the funeral,—as I shall afterwards have occasion to notice. The short extract is as follows:—“ You have all consolation in having done every duty to your son,—and Mrs Miller in particular ;—she has the rewards of her goodness in her own heart—IN HAVING DISCHARGED THE DUTIES OF A MOTHER, and, I am sure, *a mother's blessing will ever attend her.*”

I might enlarge this precious chaplet further, by the addition of another flower, recently plucked, and in consequence, of a very fresh and fragrant perfume ; but which, as I shall not now be long in overtaking it in course of my narrative, I will pass over for the present.

As for myself,—the amiable and engaging qualities of THIS DEAR FEMALE, are so numerous, and have operated during the many years we have lived together, in such a variety of forms for my comfort, that I know not which have had the greatest share, in so strongly rivetting those affections, that nothing can sever on this side the grave ;—and there is little doubt, that I had just such a one, as my own excellent and invaluable help-mate, in my eye, when, in the note at the passage formerly alluded to in my Popular Philosophy, I described woman as *the best boon that heaven in its mercy has bestowed on man*, to sweeten the toils—lessen the cares—smooth the anxieties—and ease and soften by their many tender offices in sickness and on a death-bed—the pains—and agonizing sufferings of life:—and for these beneficial and other good purposes, may God long preserve her!—to which, I again say, Amen !\*

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\* The whole of this note, which will be found at page 218, of the first volume of the publication above alluded to, I recommend to the cowardly assassins of female character, and *heartless libellers of the sex.* From what I have said in the

But before we conclude, I shall produce at least one evidence, that however strong and enduring the conjugal attachment has manifested itself on the female side, it has not been altogether unresponded to on the other,—and the instance, that I shall select, a very recent one, is the following,—from the *Morning Herald*, of Monday, the 5th March, 1832; and taken, by it, from the *Huntingdon Gazette*:—

“Died on the 15th January last, HANNAH, the wife of WILLIAM HALL, of Hemingford, Hunts, at a very advanced age. After the interment of the deceased, her poor, sorrowing, aged husband, grieving at the loss of his long faithful partner, expressed a desire that he might die before the next Sunday passed, and be buried in the same grave with his late wife.—Alas! (but why say alas!) his frail thread of life snapped asunder, and he was a corpse on the Wednesday following. This must have been one of those happy marriages alluded to by Thomson, when he says,—

“But happy they! the happiest of their kind!  
Whom gentler stars unite,—and in one fate,  
Their hearts,—their fortunes,—and their beings blend.”

And were a union of hearts, and a similarity of dispositions, more attended to, with a due deference to my formerly quoted maxim, better to have “a fortune *in a* wife, than *with* a wife;” (although the good things of this life are certainly not to be despised, if they can also be had united in the same person) there would be, as I also observed before,—“Fewer jarring,—and more happy,—marriages in the world.”

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note (†) page 62d, of the present volume, it will be seen, that I speak after the experience, of having twice drawn a prize, in what is foolishly called *the lottery of Matrimony*, and on that account, I trust, my words will be the better attended to.

## CHAPTER XL.—1828 (CONTINUED.)

Again embark on the voyage—or set out on the journey—of life.—Again exposed to the pelting of the storm.—But, again obliged to veil certain occurrences under the envelope of mystical obscurity.—A new species of trial awaits me.—Affecting extract from a friendly letter, of a kind friend.—My son's death, although daily looked for, comes suddenly at the last.—Affecting tributes to his memory.—Sorrowful reminiscences formerly alluded to.—My troubles not yet at an end.—More of the christian's legacy still in reserve for me.—Another flower.—“Death's” shafts,—again begin to fly thick.—Melancholy walk on a pleasant autumnal afternoon.—Fortunate and timeous diversion of my thoughts to other matters.—An unexpected meeting with friends from a distance.—The affairs of business must not be neglected.—Publish my new advertisement, with additional testimonies to Popular Philosophy.—How characterized by the Edinburgh Observer, &c. as being fitted for a New Year's, or Christmas Gift.—Another advertisement published in reference to the other departments of my business.—Another testimonial, being that of a great traveller.—Again labour under indisposition.—Not yet arrived, (at the close of 1828) at that “comfortable and successful period,” so confidently predicted by my friend,—a twelve month before.

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It was fortunate for me, that, I had this short respite for a breathing time, at this particular stage of my journey—that, I had this pleasant employment to divert my attention, even for a few days, from the inhospitable and dreary gloom, which was again beginning, or had already begun to overcast my horizon.

I said for a few days, and the days had been very few indeed, for, on the 14th, or within the space of three days from the 11th, I find I had been again exposed to the pelting of the storm, or, in other words, that those torrents had begun to descend upon me, which from more sources than one, with increasing, increased, unmitigated and relentless fury, poured down and beat upon my poor already battered tenement—for many days and months to come,—or, as I may perhaps say, to the end of the year.

These indeed, as belonging to *the veiled class*, must necessarily be passed over,—and I would not, even here have mentioned them, had it not been, that I wish to impress it

deeply on the mind of the reader, that my "Latter Struggles" have been of a no ordinary description indeed.

A new species of trial was, however, now awaiting me, that, whether as it related to the principal actor in the melancholy scene,—or the mournful witnesses, *needs no concealment*—The death of friends is no doubt, a solemn, a serious, and oft times a very afflictive and mournful event,—and I had been once told there were some things worse than death,—the truth of which, I had already more than once experienced.—Yet there was something peculiarly affecting in my Son's death, and I could not but be, seriously affected by it.

A dear friend writing to me some little time before it happened,—observed, "I had heard that he was not in a good way, but was not aware that the disease had made such progress \* \* \* \* \* Poor fellow ! how sadly is his noon-day overcast !—I trust that He who graciously veils the approaching crisis, will enable him to look beyond the hopes of this earthly scene, to those glorious realities where never ending spring abides, and never withering flowers, and where the inhabitants are no more sick."

He, indeed, had come forth as a flower,—and just as he had arrived at youthful maturity, was cut down ;—yet "He who graciously veils the approaching crisis" in mercy, veiled it to him,—for his death, though daily looked for, for some time,—came suddenly at the last.\*

In course of the fore part of the day, on which he died, viz. the 12th of August, I see that I had occasion to go up stairs, most likely, indeed it was for that express purpose.—I looked into Robert's chamber, and although he was making no complaint, nor appeared any way restless,—indeed he appeared to be lying rather much composed and a good

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\* On the forenoon of Tuesday, the 12th of August, I had been employed in what I think, I may denominate a work of mercy, viz. in making some suggestions to an old, but broken down acquaintance, (Mr James Watson, late Woolen Draper in this place,) which I thought might be of use to him, in the contemplated prospect of his publishing, an ingenious plan of our church-yard, which he had spent a considerable time in making up, and in which, the various allotments for its different tenants, were very accurately and distinctly pointed out :—no way thinking, at that particular moment, that before the end of the week, that interesting Golgotha, should become still more interesting to me, by having in addition to its other tenants, in that short period, *new one*, and that, from among the members of my own family.

deal at his ease,—I could not help observing, on taking hold of his hand, (although I said nothing of it at the time to his sister, who, in her anxiety to pay him every attention, was dutifully sitting at her post in the room,) that it felt cold, and was beside, all over in a clammy sweet.

I do not know if I had even an opportunity of mentioning the circumstance to my wife, for she had felt a good deal indisposed in course of the morning, and had been obliged to retire from the shop, the moment I had entered it, in order to take some medicine. But the truth soon came out, and we were not long suffered to remain in suspense, as to what that FATAL HARBINGER above alluded to, meant; for, we had just sat down to our usual meal at that period, in the little room off the shop, when my daughter, who had left her charge for the moment, to the care of the nurse, came down in breathless haste for her mother;—a message soon followed their arrival, requesting me to come up:—I did so—just in time, to be recognized through the half-glazed eyes of the dear departing youth,—who eagerly seized my hand, and before he quitted it, his soul had fled, I trust, to another and a better world, where the inhabitant, indeed, shall be no more sick,—and where, which is a still more comfortable reflection, THERE SHALL BE NO MORE DEATH!

It was on the Sunday after the funeral, that my worthy and much esteemed friend, the Rev. Mr ——— preached the sermon I formerly alluded to; and I think, that I cannot insert a better eulogium to my departed son's memory, than the following short extract, from the letter of condolence written, by that feeling and kind-hearted gentleman, on the mournful occasion.

“ I respected your son.—Nay, *I loved him*, as many others did;—and I may say, of him, that a heart more resigned to heaven I never saw. He has gone to his reward, and his works will follow him.”

In that letter also, this kind friend, had an opportunity of stating, in answer to some inquiries I had been making at him as to how far, *that* sermon was selected for the occasion, and was meant to apply to the particular situation in which our family was placed at the time;—which he did in the following words:—



"I esteemed it as a favour granted me by heaven, in having it in my power to administer consolation to a family, whom I have so long, and so sincerely respected ;—for, most assuredly, I meant the discourse to your family in particular,—and I must say, that I felt much comfort, and much satisfaction in my own mind, in having done so ; and if any thing I said afforded consolation or hope (divine consolation and heavenly hope) to Mrs Miller or you, or any of the family, I will ever consider it, as one of the happiest events of my life, never to be forgotten,—and I am also glad that both your ——— were present—to shew them in what estimation I held you all."

What immediately followed, has been already quoted, at page 341 in my last chapter, and needs not here to be repeated. I trust, my readers will excuse my having dwelt a little on this very affecting and feeling letter. It is a pleasing flower, of sweet fragrance,—although of rather a sable hue,—and referring to a subject of such melancholy interest.\*

Towards the end of August, I seem to have suffered a good deal of anxiety from *one source*, and, by the beginning of September, from *another* ; and both combined, would have no doubt, soon brought to my recollection, had it been possible that I could have forgotten it otherwise, that *my troubles were not yet to be at an end*.

But these things again, and other disagreeables which followed rapidly in their train, I must necessarily pass over ; just remarking, that, at this time, the very flattering testimonial which appeared in the Imperial Magazine for the month of August, would come very opportunely to hand, to administer to me some drops of comfort,—as the recent one, in the Inverness Courier, of the 11th of June,—must have done, on a former occasion.

"Death's shafts" now soon began to "fly thick" around us ; for, on the 7th of October, at the very time when I, and other members of the family, were under the necessity of being

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\* Among the circumstances that rendered my son Robert's sick bed the more deplorable, was that, of his having come home to take possession of it, in the progress of his disease, (as must be seen from what has been already stated ; ) just in time, to witness the preparations for, the unfortunate meeting of the preceding December. I believe, poor man ! that he was met, when just on the eve of coming out to take up his *last abode* on earth with us, by a few of my circulars (sent to his care,) calling the above meeting, being put into his hand ;—and it was no doubt in reference to, the unfortunate situation in which we were again placed, at such an advanced stage of our pilgrimage,—and to our decaying powers and ability to help ourselves,—that he expressed, as his greatest, or indeed *only regret* in dying, that he was not to live, "to do some thing for, or to make some amends to his mother," which of course must have included us both, as he well knew that we never had separate purses, or separate interests.

engaged, upon a particular occasion, at Haddington, another friend, (the same I alluded to, as having seen, for the *last* time, when passing through Edinburgh, in the month of July,) and who, then well and hearty, promised to come east and see my son Robert *soon*,—was deposited in the earth,—and thus, rather, *soon* followed him to his long home ;—and, before that day month, another death, in which we were still more interested, lessened the number of our connexions.

There is one thing, which, on account of certain mournful associations attending it, I cannot easily forget, and that was the melancholy walk I had, on the afternoon of the 14th of October, when I left Haddington, to go round by the Abbey, in order to make some enquiries respecting a certain matter, in regard to which I felt, at this time, a good deal of anxiety.

On that afternoon, and in course of that walk, the thought that there were, as I had been told, some things worse than death, came more than once across my mind, and I have reason to believe, from the effect which this recollection has on me, at this distance of time, that, that thought, in a great degree, diverted my attention from, what I intended should have been the principal purport of my walk.\*

But, in midst of all the afflictions of time, it becomes necessary, with those situated in *dependent* circumstances, that the affairs of business be not neglected ; and here again, assuredly, I have not to tax myself with any remissness in this respect ; for, I find, that while a very heavy cloud yet hung

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\* I have often thought since, that it was fortunate for me, that my thoughts were still farther diverted, and carried from that subject also, by the meeting with some friends so unexpectedly on the top of the coach that evening, at what was formerly called the Abbey toll bar,—when,—indeed, the great depression that hung over my spirits, and must have given, of course, some marked cast, to that index of internal feeling, the countenance,—could scarcely fail to be observed by my two friends ; one of whom had never before seen me, and might therefore, have been the more surprised, at the thoughtful and absent appearance, I must have assumed ; until our cogitations were all diverted to another matter, viz. the danger to which we were all, suddenly exposed, by a disgraceful racing which took place on that evening, by the three coaches, then, at one time, on the road.

I trust, my friends will now be disposed more than ever, to excuse my first appearance on that occasion, on reading these pages. It must be a dreadful prospect to have A THING "WORSE THAN DEATH," before one's eyes ; and such, indeed, was the awful prospect, that lay before me, on that never to-be-forgotten, or, may I not rather call it, fatal evening.

over us, I published, of date November 3, the advertisement which I sent out, with the additional testimonials to Popular Philosophy, alluded to in my chapter previous to the last.\*

Of the same date, November 3, I see, I issued another advertisement, relating more exclusively to matters connected with the other department of my business, which shews, that notwithstanding all the afflictions I had endured, or were still enduring, in this afflictive period, (as must appear, by comparing the date with what happened about that time,) I had not been neglecting the needful exertion in regard to *temporals*, while the other advertisement went to evidence my anxiety of being useful to the *mental*, as well as to the bodily wants of my customers.

Of date the 12th of December, I had the pleasure of hearing from Captain Basil Hall, in which, that gentleman is pleased, in his laconic way, to say, in allusion to my Popular Philosophy,—“ I have looked into your work, at about a dozen different places, and have always found something to interest and instruct me,”—which, short and laconic as it is, is certainly, *not a little*, from a traveller, who had seen so much to “ interest and instruct” him otherwise ;—in quarters, both of the *old* and of the *new* world, to which, the author never had, nor can now ever have, access. And this, it will be seen,

\* Although that advertisement, is addressed also, to “MEMBERS OF MECHANIC’S INSTITUTIONS,—for whom,” it is remarked, “the work is most suitable, as a friendly remembrancer, and convenient text book,”—and to “THE MANAGERS AND CONDUCTORS OF ITINERATING PARISH, VILLAGE, AND GARDEN LIBRARIES, for the use of which, it is so admirably adapted ;”—it would appear, that the principal cause of the advertisement being issued at this particular period, was, in consequence of its being intended to meet the eyes, in good time, of those parents, guardians, masters, and relatives, who might be disposed to make presents at the approaching seasons, but wished, to select something of that description, which “The Edinburgh Observer,” in speaking of the work recommended to their notice, immediately after it had made its appearance in a complete form, was pleased to designate, “AN EXTREMELY APPROPRIATE CHRISTMAS, or NEW YEAR’S GIFT, possessing, it is true, less tinsel ornament and useless embellishment than the Annuals, with which we are inundated at this season, but infinitely surpassing them in the utility of its contents, and its power of producing lasting and beneficial impressions on the mind.”

And surely, even had not such a respectable authority said it,—and the Rev. Ebeneser Brown, had not so early, as the first of January, as formerly noticed, recommended the book for such a purpose, by his example,—it may be difficult, to point out a work more suitable, and better adapted, for the purposes of a NEW YEAR’S, or CHRISTMAS GIFT, than the one now under consideration,—although I had had nothing to do with it, or to say in the matter.

forms the last, in that series of abridged testimonials, which I have annexed to the end of my volume,—in the hopes—that, short as the extracts are, (being all which I can possibly make room for,) they may be the means of drawing the attention of such of my readers, as may not have previously seen it, to a work, so generally eulogized and approved of, while it is yet in my power, to supply them with it, on the very favourable terms there stated.

By a letter from a friend, towards the end of the year, I observe that I am reminded, that, at that time, I had been labouring again under bodily indisposition, which, added to other considerations, connected with my situation, too plainly evince that, by the 31st, or concluding day of the year 1828, I had not yet arrived at, that “comfortable and successful period,” which my kind friend so confidently anticipated and predicted, as being “at hand” for me, **ON THAT DAY TWELVEMONTH!**

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## CHAPTER XLI.—1829.

I seem at last to have arrived at the successful period predicted by my friend.—

A stirring time with us.—Short New Year's Day excursion.—Not suffered to remain long in the shop.—Kind advice of one friendly gentleman, backed by, that of another.—A third monitor reminds me, that, although the spirit may be willing, the flesh is still weak.—Retire again to my close quarters.—An old adage verified.—The weather is again tempered to the shorn lamb.—Business still continues to prosper.—My reasons for giving a preference in my dealings to old friends.—Get once more into good spirits.—Another “rejoices in my joy.”—A visit from an *old* acquaintance, but a *young* friend.—Sup with Mr Ellis, the South Sea Missionary.—Interesting conversation.—Specimens of Australian manufactures.—Timely discovery of a severe accident, experienced by a friend.—My conduct in consequence, and its happy results.—Reasons for my recording the several circumstances.—An afternoon's excursion to Pinkerton Hill, and the adjoining heights.—Not every day that I am gratified with such a change of scenery, &c.—Appropriate lines from Cowper.—A poor man's companions in solitude.—Peep into the contents of, a library among the hills.—Early indications of indisposition this season.—But am able to resume, a good old custom, by the last night of the year.

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But if, by the last day of 1828, I had not arrived at, that comfortable state, predicted by my friend exactly a twelve-

month previous to that date, I certainly had, some reason to think, when I was so far able, on the first day of the new year, as, to take my short excursion from my bed-chamber to the shop, and found things, in such a stirring state there, that, I was now in a fair way, to have the more "successful" part of the prediction verified; for, our retail business, which had not sensibly fallen off, at any time—thanks to my good friends—was now, to all appearance, in rather a flourishing state,—and indeed, it most assuredly was so.

I was not, however, suffered to remain long at my post at the desk; for, now that I recollect, I had been more seriously indisposed than had immediately come to my recollection, and my cough being rather troublesome, at the time that worthy and excellent country gentleman, Mr HAY, of SPOTT, now of LAWFIELD, came into the shop, he joined at once with my wife in insisting, that I should retire to the back premises, where there was a fire,—and ceased not his kind importunities until he had accomplished his purpose.

It was in this situation, that my good friend, the writer of the letter above alluded to, found me, when, being in town on that day, he looked in shortly after, to enquire for me; and so far was he from disapproving of my having taken that good gentleman's advice, that he urged the propriety of it in still stronger language, if possible, than the other had done,—and did all, that he could also, to induce me, in the situation in which I then was, to take care of myself.

There was a *third* monitor, however, that now began to speak, in a language stronger and more forcible than either, and that was *necessity*, which soon convinced me, that I *must* again retire, or return, to my close quarters; and for this good reason, that, although "*the spirit was willing*," and much inclined to remain where I was, "*the flesh was weak*," and needed repose as well as warmth;—and it was long, very long, I believe, before I dared to venture so far again.\*

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\* Perhaps I was nothing the better of venturing so prematurely out on the new year's day,—but I make no reflections on that account, as I did it from the best of motives, and returned to the house, so soon as I found myself, getting too much indisposed to continue:—the exertion, like that which was the more proximate cause of the beginning of my trouble, (a walk in the country so far back as the 28th of

It is a pleasing consideration, however, that my faithful partner kept her health, rather if any thing, *unusually* well, at the time, and, in consequence, was able to keep the wheels in motion, of what a gentleman, who knew something of the matter, was pleased to style our "excellent retail business," and which he would not be disposed to think the less of, upon my having to order, on the 9th of January, a fresh supply of the particular article he dealt in, the sale of which, it appears, had far exceeded, my calculations, at the time I had previously laid in, what I then considered, a sufficient stock for my winter consumpt.

As the spring and summer advanced, business, it appears, still continued to prosper. So early as the 3d of February, I had to write again to my friend, who, I must do here the justice to say, had fully acted up to his profession, in his kind disposition to serve me, for a further supply of his article; and I must also, in justice to myself, here notice, that *one* of the *happiest reflections* I now derived from our flourishing business, was, the consideration that, it put it the more in my power, to be useful to those who had suffered by me,—and to make them some amends,—in the only manner I could now do so, viz., in the way of business.\*

November preceding, in a state of rather too much bodily debility for even so short an excursion, and brought on, I need not say how, after these afflicting details) had however, been too much for me, and gave me a very apt illustration, of the old wise saying, that "he who wishes to be soon well, must be long ill."

Be this, as it may, it was a considerable time afterward, till I was able to return to my post in the shop; and, I think it was, at least, the month of May, before I got quit of the ruff shaped comforter, which for such a length of time, I had been obliged to wear round my neck;—so much for the effects of sitting down colds:—I was in a profound state of perspiration, in the fore part of the day of Friday the 23th November, in consequence of my walk, short as it was,—I felt cold and chilly, in returning on a cold and frosty evening,—this I conceive, was the beginning of my complaint,—it was a long time, as will be seen by the above, before we saw the end of it:—indeed, my winter and spring complaints have been so constant and frequent since, even up to the date on which I now write, that I may be said, not to have seen the end of it yet!

\* My exertions, indeed, in this respect, had become so evident, that a gentleman, told my son, that I deserved a premium to a considerable amount from the very friend now alluded to, for the pains I had taken, to introduce and recommend so extensively, the particular article in which he dealt. I needed not, however, any bribery of the kind, to induce me to do, that, *which I did from principle*, and for which, and every other good I could do to promote the interest of that gentleman, I considered myself more than sufficiently repaid, in the repeated losses he had suffered by me, and the great kindness I had experienced, and was still experiencing, at his hands.

But, in this disposition to be of service to my kind friends, I trust I was not singular ; for I hold, that every person possessing any claim to a sense of gratitude, should undoubtedly act on the same principle ; and where they can be served, on the same terms as by others—by *old friends*—it is no doubt their bounden duty, uniformly, to give them a preference. It is, in fact, no more than an act of justice done to them, and, from the satisfaction I would feel myself, and have felt, in like circumstances, I cannot help saying, “ Happy is the man, that having fallen short in his payments of 20s. per pound, is able to compensate, or make up, to the creditor, the difference,—or part of the difference,—or more happily still, more than the difference,—in his future dealings ;—if, in want of the means, to do so otherwise !”

While things were thus moving on prosperously, I could not fail to get into spirits ; and I appear to have made no secret of the circumstance, otherwise one kind friend, with whom I had been corresponding, could not have written me in answer, to the following purport :—“ It indeed has afforded me much pleasure to receive intelligence from you, of such a happy complexion ; for it is long since you have been able to communicate so much good tidings, and I do rejoice in your joy.”

This is the true Christian way of going to work, to “ rejoice with those that do rejoice, and weep with those that weep.” This kind, and long endeared friend, had put his religion to the practical test,—and done both. Before now, he had, more than once, in his communications, mingled his tears with mine,—and he now rejoices—in my joy !

In the month of July, I see that I had a visit from my young friend, whose assistance was so serviceable to me, at the time my Popular Philosophy was in the act of passing through the press, and who, on this occasion, I think, had the pleasure of supping with me, in a friend’s house, in company with the Rev. Mr ELLIS, the late missionary to the South Seas, or, to those interesting groupes of recently discovered islands, which diversify and adorn the great expanse of the Pacific Ocean.

The conversation of Mr ELLIS, who, I think, said he had stood upon the very spot, where the much celebrated, in my younger days, Captain Cook was killed, in the island of Owhyhee, the largest of the Sandwich groupe—was very interesting, and listened to, on our parts, with great eagerness; and, I recollect that next morning, (for we also breakfasted with him,) that gentleman presented us with some specimens of Australian manufactures, my proportion of which, as should always be the case, if possible with presents, is still carefully preserved.

Saturday, the 1st of August, in this year, is rendered memorable in my annals, on another account, viz.; my having, on that day, had an opportunity of doing a good turn to an old and much esteemed friend, the circumstances attending which, I annex, not as taking the smallest merit in the performance of, what can only be considered in the light of an act of common humanity, or kindness, of one person to another,—but in order to shew, the promptitude with which I acted on the occasion, with its happy results;—that I may induce others, on such pressing occasions, to follow my example, and go and do so likewise.\*

\* I had been just asked by a respected friend, who was about setting out on an autumnal excursion, to take a little dinner with him in company with a friend, whom, he left me for the purpose of inviting in from the country. During the conversation I had with that gentleman, my newspaper, the Courant, had lain on the table in the cover, unopened, and the time approached for its going into other hands.

That short time, however, was big with the comfort, if not with the fate, of a most worthy man, and Providence was kind to him in that respect,—for I pulled the paper hastily from the cover the moment my friend left me, merely to have a slight glance, before it was called for; when lo! and behold! the article that caught my immediate attention, was an account of a coach accident, which had happened on the day before, at Kirkcaldy, by which, it too plainly appeared, that my good friend, Mr —, had been seriously injured.

No time was to be lost—the residence of this worthy gentleman was some miles into the country, and the Union Coach, the only opportunity for that day, would be in, on her way to the westward, in a few hours; and what made the business with me the more pressing, was, my ascertaining, by looking into an almanack, that one of the passage boats, crossed from Leith on the Sunday morning at an early hour. I immediately, therefore, despatched a messenger, with a card to the good gentleman's family, *very pressing*, no doubt, but written in a style so as to cause the least possible alarm.—I left Providence and my wife to manage the rest—went off to my dinner—and when I returned after tea, found that the worthy gentleman's daughter, had reached Dunbar some little time before the coach had arrived, and after taking a cup of tea with Mrs M. had proceeded with that conveyance to Edinburgh,—and was, I believe, at her father's bed side, next morning before breakfast; before, in fact, his fellow traveller had reached Dun-



My winter complaint seems to have set in early this season ; but, by means of one of those *notched trees* in the wilderness, which I have found of use among my reminiscences, as a kind of indexes, to point out the state of my health at any particular period, I am reminded, that I was in such condition, in that respect, towards the middle of October, (I think it was about the 8th or 9th,) as to be able, one afternoon, to accompany a friend, on a little pedestrian excursion, to the top of *Pinkerton hill*, and some of the adjoining heights in the neighbourhood ; and I must say, that, upon arriving at the ulterior points of our destination, after having called at the little domicile of my old acquaintance, ALEXANDER DOUGHTY, and obtaining his readily granted services, as a guide, in our perambulations among the mountains, we found, that in the richness and variety of natural scenery, which our different views presented, associated as the neighbourhood of these regions must ever be, with traditional and memorable historical recollections,—all our labours and toils, in climbing, were more than compensated for.\*

By the time our Martinmas fair, which takes place towards the end of November, had, however, come round, I appear

bar with the dismal intelligence,—for I met him in our entry, as he had just come off the Mall, as I was going to church at the usual hour, 11 o'clock.

\* My friend who accompanied me, was very much pleased, and agreeably entertained by the delightful prospects, we found in every direction opening upon our vision,—and as for myself, who had so seldom of late been gratified by such sights—and whose unremitting attention to the important concerns, in which I had been so long involved, during these harassing and protracted “*Latter Struggles*,” had left me so little leisure, for even an afternoon’s retirement from the busy scenes of life, to such “*loop holes of retreat*” as these sequestered regions, including Old Saunder’s lonely hut, afforded,—through which,—as one might have said, in the language of Cowper :—

“ ‘Tis pleasant —————  
To peep at such a world ; to see the stir  
Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd,  
To hear the roar she sends through all her gates  
At a safe distance,—where the dying sound  
Falls a soft murmur on the uninjured ear.”

It may readily be supposed, that I would feel both exhilarated and gratified on the occasion, especially as, in addition to our out of door employment, I had the opportunity in doors, before we left the hill, of overhauling or inspecting some of the books of our attentive and kind host’s library, which, although, huddled together in rather a promiscuous manner, and in what I should have considered rather a *veekey neuk*, or recess, (for such invaluable treasures) near the fire-side, I soon found, comprised authorities, which, as I have since told the proprietor, would not have disgraced the collection of his minister !—and which, together with his *strong natural powers*, justly accounts for that superior intelligence, (for one in his situation,) which, that humble individual, is so well known to possess.

to have had notice of the approach of my late usual winter visitant. But I must have rallied again, or got some respite by the end of the year ; for, certain circumstances serve to remind me, that, on the evening of the 31st of December, I was able to resume, and go about, a long established practice—I may say, indeed, from the time I first commenced business, down to that date ; when health and other matters permitted—viz., the settling of current accounts, with my brother merchants, and other traders, at the end of the year ; and in which, I had in some instances, to pay out, and in others to get in, balances, but in no case to any very considerable amount.

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## CHAPTER XLII.—1830.

One subject of gratulation, on being able to resume my new year's walk, to a limited extent, this year.—Sundry reminiscences connected with, that still well remembered walk.—Tribute to a dutiful son in humble life.—May be held out as an example worth imitating. Another reminiscence, attended by certain mournful recollections.—Early employment on the morning of the 2d of January.—Pleasant walk on Old Hansel Monday.—Have a crack with an early customer, and very old acquaintance.—A kind friend, has his wish at last.—Happy theme of my new Retrospect.—Another bitter sip from my cup.—A double flower springs up in my path.—Reported conversation, with the Reverend Dr Chalmers.—The subject my Popular Philosophy.—A friend's remark.—Have occasion to be in Edinburgh and Leith upon business.—Go forward to see some friends in the west.—A pilgrimage to Inverkeithing.—That I had not in my time undertaken another pilgrimage, a matter of regret.—Tribute to the memory of Hervey.—Find on my return that during my short absence, I had lost another old and much esteemed friend.—Employed this Summer in certain important researches.—Correspondence with a celebrated literary veteran.—Publish my New General and Comprehensive Shop Bill.—One great misfortune of the aged.—Death of a very old friend and customer.—Attend his funeral to a country church-yard.—New duties to perform to the living, on my way home.—Reminiscence of the breaking up of an old concern formerly alluded to.—A pleasant recollection, to be succeeded by another less so.—A stirring time with us.—Make preparations for beginning A NEW SET OF BOOKS.—In the midst of our greatest throng, deprived by indisposition of my best help.

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THERE was one matter that must have done something to excite my gratulations, or, rather, my gratitude to the bounti-

ful Giver of all good, during my rather shortened walk, on new-year's day, this year; viz., the comparative peace of mind I now enjoyed, in regard to "the stranger in America"—I mean him of my own household, for whose welfare I had been rather desponding; or, to speak truly, whose death I contemplated as almost certain, at the same time of the year, a twelvemonth ago,—but, of which suspense I had been happily relieved, by having repeatedly heard from him, in course of the year that had now passed.

This was a happy consideration, and contributed, among others, to buoy up my spirits, during that pleasant, and still well remembered walk; and as I had been thinking of writing him soon, at any rate, I thought I could not send him a more acceptable new-year's gift, than to let him know, as expeditiously as possible, the share he had in my cogitations, on the first day of the new year, that had just dawned upon us; which I concluded, would go far to comfort and console, this stranger among strangers, in a strange land,—by convincing him that, although absent from us in body, he was still present in spirit,—as these lines must shew him, if ever they reach his eyes, *that he STILL lived in our affections*, at the time these thoughts were committed to paper.

I said, "still well remembered walk;" and it is amazing, and can only be accounted for, from the unfrequency of my indulging in such pleasing excursions, how fresh the incidents, that occurred on that walk, and at its termination, are still in my memory. I recollect calling, as I returned, on the worthy old gardener, (Peter Purves,) then residing in the *new-house*, and was much gratified to learn, that things were in a train with his landlord, to secure him a habitation and locality, still in our neighbourhood,—and where, there was a probability, at least, of his spending his latter days, in the society, and under the notice, of his dutiful son.\*

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\* The conduct of this young man WILLIAM PURVES, may, in this respect, be held out as an example to some of the youths of the present day, who are but too apt to forget or overlook *their obligations to the aged authors* under Providence *of their being*, in the prosecution and indulgence of their own wayward fancies. Not recollecting, or not willing to recollect, that they, who acted the part of their guardians and supporters, during the tender and helpless years of infancy, have some *natural claims upon them, for a reciprocal turn of good offices*, when

Upon my arrival at home from that walk, I have still a pretty distinct recollection of the lady and gentleman, who were in waiting and who, communicated to me, another piece of pleasing intelligence,—although the recollection of that circumstance, at the present moment, is not unattended with a melancholy association.

My resolutions are seldom long formed, until they are carried into execution ; and as it was, besides necessary, that no time should be lost, in order to catch the packet, and Saturday, particularly at such a season, was likely to be a throng day with us, I find, that I was at work so early, as betwixt the hours of four and five, on the 2d of January,—which happened, at this time, to be on that day of the week,—in committing my thoughts to paper, in order to be in readiness for the first opportunity, of getting them conveyed, across the Atlantic.

After this, it would appear, however, that I had had, a relapse of my trouble, although, by the 18th, I had again become so far convalescent, as to be able to take, a pretty considerable round of a walk, for one in my state,—on that pleasant *Old Hansel Monday* afternoon,—on which, accompanied by the historian of Dunbar, we had an opportunity of enjoying a pretty long crack about *auld langsyne*, and the days that were past, with an old and very intelligent acquaintance.\*

Upon the whole, the month of January seems to have glided smoothly and comfortably away ; so that a kind friend, who had occasion to write me, towards the end of it, seems to have had his wish at the last, when he says, “ I hope this will find you all in your usual way, or rather better than

the days of infirmity and decrepitude come, and the heavy hours arrive, when otherwise, it may be said,—they have no pleasure.

This, in that respect, exemplary, young man, continued at his post of duty to the last, for old Peter died full of days, towards the end of last January ; and it is to be hoped, in the kind attentions of that worthy family, in whose service he had spent the greater part of his days, at Spott, and who *never* forgot him,—and the filial devotion of his son to his comfort,—he met with that solace, which is ever welcome, but peculiarly so to the aged, on a death bed.

\* Mr THOMAS HUME, farmer at Newtonlees, who had been one of my book customers, from an early period ; and, adopting the language of the Agriculturists on the occasion, who had since, given the most indisputable evidence, by the progress of his intellectual culture, that, the good seed, *in his case*, had not been sown on a barren soil.

usual, because your usual is, unhappily, too much, perhaps, the wrong way;" and that I really did feel more comfortable at the end of this month, or beginning of the next, than I had, perhaps, at the same time of the year, for many years back, is abundantly evident,—from the wording of my new Retrospect, dated the 2d of February,—in which, pleasing considerations—brightening prospects—and more and more, causes of gratitude and thankfulness,—seem to be the burden of my theme.

About the middle of February, I, however see, that I had another bitter sip to taste in my cup;—but, to balance this, in some degree, in *this world of ups and downs, and never-ceasing changes*, I was soon after, or of date the 7th of April, presented with another flower, or, rather a kind of double flower,—in the form, of a sort of round about testimonial, to my Popular Philosophy,—as reported, by a friend, as the purport of a conversation, a friend of his had recently, with the Reverend Dr Chalmers.\*

Early in July, I had occasion to transact some business in Edinburgh and Leith, when I embraced the opportunity of proceeding a little farther to the westward, to see some friends who resided at no great distance from the North Queensferry, and which little journey, in its turn, gave me an opportunity, which I also embraced, of making, in company with my friend, a pilgrimage,—not to the tomb of Robert the Bruce—not to the spot pointed out as the burial-place of the kings, in

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\* The Reverend Dr C. is reported to me in my friend's letter, to have expressed himself to one of his pupils, a student of Divinity, to the following effect,—which I give, from my friend's letter, in the exact words of the young gentleman himself. Referring to a conversation that took place, at a breakfast given by the learned professor to a number of his pupils, he says, "Knowing that I came from Dunbar, he asked me if I knew, Mr ———? I answered in the affirmative. You know," rejoined he, "That he is the author of a work, entitled, 'The Book of Nature Laid Open,' I consider that work, so far as I have had time to look into its pages, to possess very considerable merit." To which my friend, who should now by his experience, be himself a judge, of such matters, is pleased to add, "Now, such an opinion given by so distinguished a character as Dr Chalmers, in the way of an unreserved, *TWA HANDED CRACK*, I take to be, (to use his own phraseology) of very considerable value. I am myself proud of it, in as much as it verifies the opinion, which I ventured *PUBLICLY* to express of your work, long before it had received the approbation of any man of eminence, or name of weight."—This, joined to the other, may be styled a little nosegay,—or, at least, two flowers in one, for which I am the more grateful.

Dunfermline Abbey—not even, to see the place which once contained the canonized relics of the sainted Queen Margaret,—no, but to my recent, (though long known by report,) and worthy correspondent,—the Reverend Ebenezer Brown, the venerable minister of the Secession at Inverkeithing.

With this visit, the good man expressed himself much gratified; and I must allow, although I have not room here for further particulars, I was no less so.\*

\* While on the subject of Pilgrimages, I cannot help expressing my regret, that, in none of my journeys in England, in which I have had occasion to travel on both sides of Northamptonshire, I never diverged, or thought, at the time, of diverging, so far from my direct line of road, as to bring me in contact with **WESTON FAVEL**, in order, to indulge myself, with a meditation among the tombs, over the burial place of the far famed, and justly admired Author of “the Meditations,”—and learn instruction, from the humble memorial that points out the spot, where are deposited the remains of this excellent person, who, it will be seen, by what follows, wished no artificial expedient, to perpetuate his memory.

“Such, such,” (said this good man,) “is the monument I would wish for myself. Let me leave a memorial in the breasts of my fellow creatures. Let surviving friends bear witness, that I have not lived to myself alone, nor been altogether unserviceable in my generation.—Oh! let an uninterrupted series of beneficent offices be the inscription,—and the best interests of my acquaintance the plate that exhibits it.

“Let the poor, as they pass by my grave, point out the little spot, and thankfully acknowledge—‘There lies the man, whose unwearied kindness was the constant relief of my various distresses; who tenderly visited my languishing bed, and readily supplied my indigent circumstances.

“Let a person, once ignorant and ungodly, lift up his eyes to heaven, and say within himself, as he walks over my bones: “Here are the last remains of that sincere friend, who watched for my soul.”

The expressed wish of that exemplary person, as will be learned more largely in his meditation, over what he calls the “garnished sepulchre” of the “entombed warrior,” seems not to have been lost sight of, by his only surviving sister, when she placed the humble memorial above alluded to, over his grave,—graced with the following inscription:—

Here lie the Remains  
Of the REV. JAMES HERVEY, A. M.

(Late Rector of this Parish,)

That very pious man,  
and much admired Author,  
who died, Dec. 25, 1758,

In the 45th year of his age.

“Reader, expect no more to make him known;

Vain the fond elegy, and figured stone:

A name more lasting, shall his writings give,—

There, view display’d, his heavenly soul, and live.”

I can have no expectation *now*, whatever, to read the above inscription in its original form, but **HIS WRITINGS**, can never, for the early benefit I received from them, in the prosecution of my youthful physico-theological studies,—and for recommending to me, in my juvenile days, so many names that afterwards ranked among my greatest favourites,—can never, I say, be erased from my memory:—while, this humble notice, all that I have *now* to offer, in tribute to

In looking from the coach, on coming up Belhaven hill, on the evening of my arrival, I perceived some indications of sorrow and seemingly anxious looking, from the window of a well-known house, as we passed; as if something mournful had taken place, and some person was expected. I suspected the worst;—it turned out, as I suspected:—another old and much esteemed friend, the Rev. Mr ———, of ———, who was then a resident with his father-in-law, in that lodging, and with whom I had conversed, while he lay reclined upon the sofa, on the Sunday evening before I left home,—had, in the short intervening period, breathed his last.\*

In course of the summer, I seem to have busied myself a good deal, in certain researches, which ultimately led me into a correspondence with a character long known and celebrated in the annals of literature; and who, from various considerations, I thought would likely be able to throw some light upon a subject, in which, at that time, I found myself deeply interested. I wrote this gentleman in regard to the cause and subject of my enquiries, on the 13th of August, and who, although a perfect stranger to me, otherwise, was so very obliging as to reply, of date the 18th,—which, although by no means satisfactory, in one sense,—evidenced at once the readiness of the writer, to give me all the information in his power, and the interest he took, in a case, in which, he feelingly expressed himself, as “sympathizing with me very sincerely.”

Of date, September 1830—for, I see, that no particular day is mentioned—I issued my new and pretty comprehensive retail SHOP BILL; for, among all my *ups* and *downs*, my

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the memory of so good a man, will shew, in what estimation I still hold them,—and through them, that pious and exemplary individual,—who imparted to them—*thoughts which breathe*—with love and charity, to mankind—and *words that burn*—with the true flame of genuine and unaffected devotion, to his Maker.

\* It was to this I alluded, towards the commencement of the present chapter, when I said, that the recollection of a certain circumstance, was not unattended with a melancholy association;—for it was this worthy and amiable gentleman, whom with his lady, I found in waiting, on my return from my walk on the New Year's Day;—they were, at that time, on the outlook for the premises the old gentleman now occupied, in that pleasant situation, within a short distance of Dunbar. Here my long known and much respected friend died, during my absence, and the old gentleman, was doomed not long after to follow. So that the dwelling was at once filled and vacated,—after being so much depopulated,—in course of the year.

kind customers and good friends, in the way of trade, knew well, that I never allowed any concern whatever, to draw my attention, from that much valued,—the retail part, of my business :—of this, I had frequently before, given evidence, by the publication of my shop bills, and of which, this one, was a new specimen.

But, alas ! how many of my *earliest* friends, and *oldest* customers now sleep in the dust ! Within these few years I have seen so many drop off, that I am forcibly reminded of *one of the evils*, OLD MEN must lay their account, to submit to, and that is, *to outlive their early companions*,—their *oldest acquaintances, on life's journey*—to find themselves placed in the situation, described by the poet, when he says :

“ With me, that time is come ; my world is dead ;  
A new world rises, and new manners reign :  
Foreign Comedians, a spruce band ! arrive,  
'To push me from the scene, or hiss me there.  
What a pert race starts up !—the strangers gaze,  
And I at them ;—my neighbour is unknown.”

Of the death of *old* friends and *old* customers, I had indeed, many experiences of late ; but there was one in reserve for the month of October, which, as respecting the individual who wrote me the very affectionate and gratifying card, of the 26th January, 1825, and formerly noticed at page 298, I must not altogether pass over in silence.

On the morning of Monday the 25th of October, I observe, this *early* friend, and respected individual, departed this life ; and on the Saturday following, being the 30th of the month, I attended the funeral, and witnessed the coffin committed to the grave, in the burial-ground of Innerwick, (the parish in which he had so long officiated as the parochial schoolmaster,) *exactly* that day forty-two years, from the time his name first stands recorded in my books,—which is rather a singular coincidence ; yet such is the case, for that first entry is on the 30th of October, 1788,—a time, in fact, when I was not as yet, fully in business on my own account.

It was, to be sure, a long time to look back, and must have had considerable influence in producing a melancholy effect on my spirits at the time, which, notwithstanding, did not make me forget my duties to the living ; for, on that day, I recollect, that, in company with another respected gentleman, I left the



chaise at the turn of the road down to East Barns, and made a call, in order to enquire for another most worthy brother of the profession, who had been ailing for some time, and was still far from being well, although in that state of good spirits, which had so long characterised that worthy man, during his long series of protracted, and often I suspect, most acute suffering.\*

But there is one thing I had almost forgotten among the events of this autumn; which as containing the crowning piece to a business, in which I had long some concern, and in a manner so satisfactory to my feelings, I must not forget. The circumstance I allude to, was the discontinuance of *Mrs Laidlaw's* morning coach,—which had, for so long a period as since the month of October, 1804, continued to start from my shop,—on the morning of Monday the 20th of September; and it was on this occasion, that I was favoured with the kind letter of acknowledgment for my past services, from the son of the proprietress of that coach, formerly alluded to, or rather, so largely quoted in the note, at page 112.†

The 25th of December, I see, I honoured this year, by the designation of being “rather a better than usual Christmas,”

\* The sufferings of that patient, and resigned, and by those who knew him, much respected individual, Mr JOHN SMITH, late School Master in East Barns, are now also at an end,—having been relieved from them by the hand of death, since this volume went to press,—leaving a young widow, and a family of small children to lament their loss. He was a most amiable, obliging, and friendly character; and had I a page to spare, instead of being pinched, as I now am for room, would most willingly devote it to his memory.

But “deaths shafts” seem, indeed, to have been flying pretty thick, among my worthy old acquaintances in this profession (with whom, I was very generally acquainted as a bookseller,) of late—for I have seen by the papers, since the death of Mr Inglis, that, of another very old acquaintance announced, viz, of Mr STEEL, late Schoolmaster at Lobberton, a most worthy man, and one with whom I was intimately acquainted, at the time I did business with him, when residing in this neighbourhood, as schoolmaster of Oldhamstocks, near the beginning of the present century.—But alas! what shall I say—Mr THOMAS GRAHAM, our own late parochial Schoolmaster, my long respected and much esteemed friend, with whom, and his family, I had been on terms of the greatest intimacy and friendship, for a period little short of a quarter of a century, was the first victim to Cholera in our parish,—having been cut off suddenly by that disease, on the morning of Monday the 23d January, 1832, at his residence in the village of West Barns.

† This letter, I may say, was a flower of its kind, and a pleasing reminiscence; but from what I have just related, it must have been seen, that it was soon to be succeeded by a reminiscence less pleasing, that of seeing an acquaintance of more than forty years standing, consigned to the tomb. But that, alas! was also soon to be followed up by matter for reflection, of a more grievous description still, but upon which, I shall not at present enter.

in consequence, it is probable, of my having got handed me, *on that day*, a few pounds, of what I had feared for some time, had become a desperate debt ; while the stirring nature of our business at the time—the circumstance of my having prepared, or being in the act of preparing, *a new set of books* to begin the year with, and sundry other considerations, must have made the year 1830, after all, go down in comparative peace and serenity ;—if it had not been—ay, here comes the *if*—that, for the last week of the year, I had been almost, or, I may say, altogether, deprived of the services of my valuable helpmate, who, from Friday the 24th, to the 31st, had not been able to enter the shop, by severe indisposition—the longest period, I think, she had been out of it, at one time, for nearly *thirty* years !

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## CHAPTER XLIII.—1831.

The winter 1830-31, a stirring time with us.—Good effects of certain arrangements.—Indications at last, of my friend's prediction being likely to be fulfilled.—A welcome stranger to the shop on New Year's Day.—A temporary respite and retreat from my labours during the stranger's short continuance.—Days of exhaustion, in so short a period, how accounted for.—Lasting effects of an old fever.—How the case was aggravated on this occasion.—An apology, that may yet, not be too late for the information of some of my readers.—Sweet music to my ears on a Saturday evening.—The first Sunday of the year 1831, to me indeed "a day of rest to the weary."—No wonder that I should have felt grateful for, and much gratified by, such an institution.—Reasons for differing from the admirers of the French decades.—My mind must have been in a state of comparative placidity and serenity on that blessed day.—Pleasing considerations and cheering reflections, at this particular stage of life's journey.—Things continue to move on spiritedly and prosperously with us, until the 14th of January.—Under what circumstances, I commenced those retrospections, on the morning of that day, at an early hour, which were continued afterwards, at different intervals, to the 15th December following.—Sundry extracts from my next retrospect, illustrative of my motives and reasons for so doing,—and for taking *TIME*, once more by the forelock, in order to expedite my task.

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THAT winter was indeed a busy and stirring time with us. And how could it be otherwise, when, in addition to our very

respectable retail trade, augmented, as it had been, in course of the by-past year, by some *new* customers of the first respectability, which must have gone so far, in the way of compensating, for the loss, of dying out *old* friends, (for I have the happiness to say, that during the whole course of my lengthened pilgrimage, I seldom lost a customer once acquired, whom I had a wish to retain, otherwise.)

We had also now, the business of two coaches to attend to, but in that, I was much relieved by the assistance of my son, whose aid, indeed, I made an indispensable preliminary to my having any further concern in that line; and having his shop over the way, almost immediately opposite my own, it was judged most agreeable, and conducive, to the interest of all parties, that, as the proprietors of the new Berwick coach, and one of the Dunbar coaches, were anxious that I should allow their respective vehicles to start from, and draw up at, the *old* established office, my own shop, he should just step across the street and manage the business on my side of it, as formerly,—which, on account of the shortness of the distance, did not put him to any material inconvenience, and, as will be seen in the sequel, was of some use to me.

The arrangement, indeed, at this particular time, was attended with the happiest effects, for it was the means of bringing my son, when he had occasion, to come across the street on the coach business, more in contact with those particular cases, in which we stood most in need of his assistance, in my wife's absence; and of rendering himself useful in a number of shapes, in which, for want of experience, my daughter could not be considered so well qualified, although she certainly, on that trying occasion, did all in her power to make herself useful to the extent of her ability;—for it was now indeed, a *stirring time* with us in many respects, and there were certainly more indications, of my having arrived, or being on the eve of arriving, at, that *successful period* so confidently predicted by my friend, at the close of the year 1827,—than I had before experienced, since that kind, but as it turned out, too sanguine prediction, was expressed.

Yes! that successful period, after being three years in *abeyance*, seemed to be in a fair way to come at last,—if it

had not already arrived. Alas ! but it had come sooner—or that, when it did come, it had been of longer duration ! But, as I once said before, misfortune will come soon enough, come when it may, so I must again say, I need not anticipate.

The weight that lay so much on my shoulders, notwithstanding these useful helps, during this busy and throng, though, in the absence of my partner, heartless and cheerless week, appears to have been too much for me, for I well recollect, that on her making an effort to return to, at least the back premises of, the shop, on the new year's day, as I had attempted, from a state of confinement, two years before, I was led to embrace the opportunity, to step up stairs, and throw myself into the easy chair by the fire side, which my partner had just quitted, in order to recruit, if possible, by a ten or twenty minutes wink, as Dr Kitchiner might have expressed it, my languid and exhausted frame, which seemed to have suffered much from the exertions of the week.

It may excite the surprise of some of my readers, that I should speak of exhaustion, by a *single* week, of more than ordinary toil,—but let it be taken into consideration, that *my* toil, for *this* week, and the *two concluding days* of the former one, was not only more than ordinary, but a good deal of it, of a kind, not at all fitted for my capabilities of enduring.

The throng with my accounts making out, &c. at this season of the year, I contrived to get the better of, by embracing the opportunity of the fire that we were obliged to keep constantly burning in our bed room, at this time of distress, to get out of bed at an early hour, and have a good deal of my work, that way, despatched, before the hurry of the day commenced ; but that which I felt most oppressive, was the share I had of *standing* at the back of the counter ; and this, (as it may appear to most of my readers,) being the most pleasant and lightsome part of a shop business, especially with the help I could still command,—requires some explanation :—

The fact is, that so far back as the end of the year 1803, (and, as I think, I have already had occasion to mention) I was *almost*, according to the doctor's report, at the end of life's journey,—in consequence of a severe and dangerous fever.

The effect of that fever, upon one of my legs at the time, was such, that much friction was necessary, in order to restore the circulation, and I believe, an unusual supply of covering was requisite for many years afterwards, in order to preserve it, when so restored.

Now, these effects continued to be felt, for a period much longer still, in the difficulty I experienced, in standing long in one position,—and the manner in which my leg was affected at particular times, especially in frosty weather ;—and it unfortunately so happened on this occasion, that a strong and severe frost, set suddenly in, so that, I had two causes instead of one, at the same time, operating against me.\*

The state of exhaustion in which I found myself, on the conclusion of the *last* day of the week, which, as will be seen from what I have already related, was on this occasion the *first* day of the year, being thus, I trust, satisfactorily accounted for, it may readily be supposed, that the turning of the key in the lock, and the grating of the iron bar of the shop door that evening, would be *sweet music* in my ears ; for I knew well, that there would be *now* an *intervening* day of repose. And that welcome Sabbath, was to me, indeed, what our minister is accustomed to designate it, in his beautiful prayer, *A DAY OF REST TO THE WEARY*,—as well as, *of instruction to the ignorant*,—and *devotion to the pious*,—all three excellent objects in their way, and worthy of such a merciful and benign institution.

No wonder then, that so laborious a drudge at the oar of human life as I had been, should have felt grateful for such

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\* This, I trust, which I have had occasion to mention, as a matter of course, in this part of my narrative, will be deemed a sufficient apology by those good friends, who, not being previously acquainted with the circumstance, may have been sometimes surprised that I took so little of, the back of the counter business into my own hands, for these many years,—although I have certainly given sufficient evidence, that I have not been idle otherwise ; while I have every reason to conclude, by the universal suffrage of our kind customers, that my presence was not much missed with such a substitute in my place ;—for, whatever may have been our failings, and however we may have fallen short of our duty in other respects, I trust, those of the public who know us best, will do us the justice to say, that few persons in trade, have left their business, without one or other of the *heads of the house* being on the top of it, more seldom than we have done,—and few businesses, I believe, to the same extent, have been conducted with less help than we have had of late,—and otherwise, upon more economical principles.

an institution,—not only on this occasion, but so, as to make me declare at the time, when the French people in their rage for innovation, and a disposition to fly to contrary extremes, had commenced computing their time by *decades*, and so, limiting the time, so mercifully granted to man for rest from his labour, to *one in ten*, instead of, *one in seven*, days :—\*

No wonder, I say, that with my views of the subject, I should have declared myself,—before the age as I may have appeared in other things,—so well pleased, with this old relic of ancient usage, that, *if* any change, in regard to the time set apart as a day of rest, could be judged lawful and right, as well as expedient,—and I had any say in the business,—I would rather have decided in favour of *one* day in *five* ! than *one* day in *ten*, according to the *decade* way of going to work ; and so have contributed, rather to shorten, than to increase the hours of labour ;—and that, from the most perfect conviction, that if men would allow themselves to be robbed of their birth right in this respect, it would only be to render them the more beasts of burden,—without adding, any thing to their income on that account,—while the noblest parts of their nature, for want of leisure, must be left comparatively unimproved,—and the sacrifices of devotion, for want of a convenient season, be often left unoffered—unperformed !

This is one of those points then, in which I think, it will be as well to *let well alone* ; and never let the philanthropist think, among all his schemes of benevolence or improvement, of countenancing any thing, that would add to the ignorance, while at the same time, it would take from the comforts, and the privileges,—of the poor.

That BLESSED DAY, the first Sunday of 1831, was indeed to me, *a day of rest to the weary* ; and as my mind must have

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\* I say contrary extremes, from the conviction that many of those men who were induced both before and since the *decade mania* in France, to renounce their Christian profession, and embrace infidel, or deistical principles, whether in France or elsewhere,—were impelled to do so, by the absurd dogmas and superstitious mummeries, attempted to be imposed upon them by, themselves a blinded, or interested priesthood,—for the pure and peaceable doctrines of Christianity, which, freed from its corruptions, and left to operate on men's minds in its native purity, would soon create a heaven upon earth,—and bring about the fulfilment of that petition—which is so often used—but so little understood—**THY KINGDOM COME.**

been in a comparatively placid and tranquil state, and predisposed to its enjoyment, to what it had been on the first Sunday of the year, for many years before, I must have enjoyed it the more.

For it was certainly at this period, a pleasing consideration to think, that I had now, at last, surmounted so many difficulties—that in the brightening prospects which had begun to open upon me, eleven months ago, I had not been disappointed—that I had at the commencement of another year, so many additional causes of gratitude—and that, there was in fact, now more than ever, a prospect of arriving, if, as I said before, I had not as yet actually arrived at, that more successful period in business, so confidently predicted by my friend ;—and if, at my time of life, I was compelled to begin **A NEW SET OF BOOKS**, in order to accomplish this prediction, so far as my aid could go, to bring it about in its fullest extent, I must, nevertheless, have been borne up by the comfortable hope, that, but a few years more toil, would place me in circumstances comparatively easy, and in which, I would be less dependent on friends, than I had been for some years past ;—and that, in consequence, while my infirmities increased, my cares and anxieties, were in a fair way, to be on the decrease :—And above all, I must have been much cheered and encouraged by the thoughts, that I would soon again be consoled and assisted, in the labours of the shop, by the very efficient help, a kind Providence had raised up for me,—whose convalescence, by this time, had been considerably advanced.

Such then, must have been my feelings at the time, and, it is presumed, that with such sentiments, and with such feelings, I returned to my post in the shop, on the Monday morning ; where, to be brief, it appears I was in a very short time followed, by that endeared partner, whose presence and assistance, contributed once more to render the toils of life pleasant—and to smoothe the rugged cares of business.

Things continued to move on, spiritedly and prosperously for some time, and in this state, it is presumed, were affairs with us (for I must have arrived at a state of considerable tranquillity, and peace of mind, before I could have come to

the resolution of venturing upon the task) and the throngest part of the season got over, when, at the early hour of the 14th January formerly mentioned, I set about, commencing these retrospections, which I continued for the greater part of the year, but was at last obliged to discontinue, under circumstances so peculiarly distressing, as those mentioned in my vi. chapter,—and which, I will again, soon have occasion to notice.

It had been long a favourite object with me, from whatever cause it proceeded, to begin something of the kind, *at the time I should pass THE BOUNDARY LINE OF THREESCORE*; but as my reasons for so doing, as well as for “*taking TIME by the forelock*,” at that early hour of a winter morning,—are pretty distinctly given in my next annual retrospect, which I committed to paper on the 13th of the ensuing month of February, I shall conclude this chapter, with a few extracts from it, and thus close, what I can only call, after all, a short analysis of *THE FOURTH BOOK OF MY LIFE*!

After commencing my retrospect of the above date, with one of the mottos, that I had adopted for my retrospections:

“ ‘Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours,  
And ask them what report they bore to heaven.”

I go on to say:—“So thought the poet—so, it appears, thought the patriarch Isaac, when he made choice of the even-tide, to go out into the fields to meditate,—and so, I have just given the most indisputable evidence, do I think,—by adopting the above lines as a motto, and commencing my retrospections on a larger scale, on the *first* morning of my ‘Evening of Life.’—‘Tis greatly wise,’ indeed, ‘to talk with our past hours,’ and what more suitable season, than the even-tide of the day,—and the still more sober and solemn twilight,—which intervenes betwixt life and death,—‘*THE EVENING OF LIFE*,’—for this purpose!”

“I have therefore chosen, the latter interesting period, for my retrospections,—and have commenced my operations, at the moment of passing the boundary line—which separates my autumn from winter;—my vigorous, and declining manhood, from the growing infirmities, and chilling blasts of age and decrepitude;—in order that, by the blessing of God on my



humble efforts, I may be as far advanced as possible, before the shades of life descend, and the night of death cometh, wherein no man can see to work."

"This," I observed further, "fully accounts for my taking *TIME* by the forelock, and beginning, these retrospections, under the appellation of 'the evening of life,' at such an early hour on the 14th of January,—on which day I attained *the age of threescore*;—which may well be supposed to have included *THE MORNING*—the *FORENOON*—and the *AFTERNOON*; as well as, the *SPRING*—the *SUMMER*—and the *AUTUMN*;—leaving all that remain to come, under the designation of—*THE EVENING*,—OR,—*THE WINTER*—OF LIFE.

#### CHAPTER XLIV.—1831 (CONTINUED.)

Lay aside my task till a more convenient season.—Very sufficient reasons for doing so.—Arrival at the period, when but *one* down sitting was necessary to enable me conveniently to leave it off.—Extraordinary event, which took place in that short interval.—Remarkable dream.—Its timeous occurrence to be noticed, or to be useful.—How I treated it at the time, as appears by an extract from my original M.S.—The night on which the dream took place, also fully identified by that extract.—The subject of that most remarkable vision described.—It follows me in my waking moments.—Is fully realized.—"Night visions" in this instance, had in reality befriended me.—A possible question that may be probably asked.—The facts must speak for themselves.—Nothing inconsistent in it, with the usual operations of the Deity.—Nor, any thing very extraordinary in certain suppositions.—The vision of General Junot, previous to the Battle of Lonato.—The spectre of Brutus before the Battle of Philippi.—Dream of Socrates, previous to the introduction to him of his future disciple, Plato.—The power of the Almighty unbounded and unconfined in the manner of its working, no less in providential, than in creative occurrences.—Strange effects of *delirium* in a fever, as experienced by the author.—I feel sore, very sore, at the peculiarly calamitous situation, to which I find myself so suddenly reduced.—This soon becomes too apparent by its direful consequences.—The most predominant cause of my sufferings.—No wish to desert my post on such a distressing occasion.—Mournful reflections at my time of life.—All my resignation, philosophy and fortitude, found insufficient for a season, to support me under it.—My best apology.—Take the advice of my visionary monitor, when no other alternative would do.—Call a meeting.—One great source of consolation.—Affecting specimen of the kind manner in which my circular was received.

THESE retrospections, as I observed before, I continued at convenient intervals, and as I could find leisure from the

date of their commencement in January, until the 15th of the month of December following. On the evening of the 14th, I had brought my structure to that situation, in which, to use an architectural phrase, it might be covered in, and left with safety, for the winter; or, to use another way of expressing myself, I had completed my work so far, as to have brought the rough sketch or outline of it, down to the time I had commenced my task,—and which, consequently embraced, in the imperfect state, in which, however, it yet was—the whole period of my existence from the 14th January, 1771, to the 14th January of that year, 1831.

All that now remained before I laid my work for a season aside, was, to put on the cap or crowning stone, which I intended to do, and actually did, in the form of another, or concluding chapter on the 15th, when, as I also have formerly observed, in order to devote my attention more exclusively to the concerns of business, at the approaching throng season of the year, I actually laid my task aside, or, as I expressed myself in writing to a friend, “*hung my harp upon the willows,*”—with the intention, of resuming it again, at a more convenient season.

Matters, it will be observed, had been brought *almost* to that desirable state, in which I wished to have them, (when this interruption which I had for sometime been contemplating, was to take place,)—by the evening of the 14th. The 15th I meant, when I retired to bed that night, to devote to another down sitting, for the purpose of writing the concluding chapter;—but in that short time,—that interval of a single night,—a very extraordinary, as it afterwards turned out to be, event took place,—and which will be found to be, no doubt, the most extraordinary circumstance, take it altogether, that has been recorded in my narrative.

In short, I “*dreamed a dream,*” not less remarkable and memorable for its subject, than it was for the *precise time* it happened; for, had that dream been a night sooner, as not coming conveniently into the subject of my writing on the 14th,—and nothing happening on that day, to bring it to my recollection, it might have altogether escaped my notice. If, it had been a day later, and then, it had been too late to

have been noticed in the concluding chapter of my Retrospections, and consequently, could not have stood on record, as the best evidence of my veracity, in the relation of, what now appears to me, an event of a most extraordinary nature.

For whatever obloquy or sneering, I may expose myself to, by so doing, I cannot forbear remarking, that, so sure as Joseph was warned by a dream, upon a very pressing and urgent occasion, to flee into Egypt, so sure was I warned,—and prepared,—and the better fitted,—for the shock I was doomed to receive within the short period of two or three days from the time that it happened,—by that, now to me, *ever memorable dream*,—a dream never to be forgotten—never to be erased from my memory, however lightly I might have thought of, or treated it at the time—and that, I so thought of, and so treated it at the time, may be learned from the manner in which I introduced it, along with another subject, of also, rather mystical import, into the manuscript, (which is still preserved, to testify for itself, if necessary)—of my concluding chapter.

In that chapter, after enumerating a number of motives for contentment, gratitude and resignation, arising out of a consideration of my more recent experiences,—I go on to say, “ what may be yet reserved for me, in the womb of futurity, I know not, and cannot pretend to guess.—I have even had many ups and downs, and hopes and fears, during the short lapse of time, since I began these retrospections—*the sealed packet*, is yet unopened;—and I have had, *a fearful dream*, last night.”

In regard to what I said farther in relation to the sealed packet,—(as belonging to that class which I have so repeatedly hinted at, under the designation of “ the veiled subjects,”) I shall here say nothing;—but, in respect to the *dream*, I could not help remarking, “ Although there can be no doubt, that, if it is so the will of the Almighty, night visions may befriend us, I put little or no reliance upon it one way or other. My hopes and expectations are fixed upon a too sure foundation, to be easily shaken either by the ravings of a distempered fancy, or the night ravings of an uneasy mind.” Does this breathe any thing of being under the influ-

ence of a superstitious terror, for the consequences of dreams?—And yet, let me record the subject of that night's vision, as to the *time* of which, there could be no mistake,—for the above extract is taken from the very text of my manuscript, written on the 15th,—a day, let it be observed, before Mr ———'s circular was issued,—and then, leave my readers to draw what inference they choose, from the event; or attempt to explain away the singularity of the circumstance, in the best manner they can.

I say then, and say it positively, and without the smallest danger of contradiction,—that, in the night which intervened betwixt the 14th and 15th December, 1831,—I DREAMED A DREAM, and that, the reminiscences attendant upon the recollection of that dream, which are too strongly now impressed upon it ever to be erased from my memory, are to the following purport:—I dreamed, that I was standing in my shop, when some person told me, that my old friend Mr ——— was sitting in the Mail Coach, which was then in the act of changing horses, on its way to the South, at the usual place opposite to Mr Cossar's Inn, or, rather, on this occasion, I think it was a little further down the street, and so nearly opposite to my own shop door.

As I had previously been thinking of, ordering down from that gentleman, a supply of the particular article in which he dealt, in order to be the better prepared for the approaching season of demand, I stepped out to the coach, in which, I found my friend sitting alone, in an apparently disconsolate, or at least, very thoughtful mood.

Upon making known to him the purport of my stepping out, when I had heard that he was in the coach, he listened to me, for some time, apparently with a good deal of attention, although, still seeming in part, wrapt up in his reverie,—when all on a sudden, he broke silence by assuring me, in his usual hasty manner, when any way agitated, that, he could no longer be of service to me, even in the way of business,—and concluding with these memorable words, which he pronounced most emphatically, with the repetition, exactly as I have recorded it,—“ You must call a meeting—call a meeting.”

These prophetic words, as they afterwards proved to be—"you must call a meeting—call a meeting," uttered at a time, when I so little expected any thing of the kind, followed me in my waking moments.—It was to them I alluded, in the above extract from my M.S. and they still ring too audibly in my ears, to be easily forgotten.

Thus, I have put the public in possession of the facts relating to that most extraordinary dream, happening as it did at *that precise time*,—now let my readers mark the event.

The DREAM, let it be kept in view—took place in the night betwixt the 14th and 15th,—the manner in which I treated it on the 15th, is related as above.—Mr —— issued his circular calling a meeting of his creditors, on the 16th,—but as an evidence that I had heard nothing of it until the 17th, I have, to this moment, an unfinished letter in my possession, ordering the very article, I was in want of being sent, at that time, and which, I had been writing previously to Mr ——, calling in the afternoon of the 17th, and conveying to me, the *dreadful*—and had it not been, that, in this instance, "night visions," indeed, "had befriended me," and, the intensity of the shock, had been somewhat broken, or lightened by the dream, (which, at that instant shot across my mind, little as I thought of it at the time,)—might have turned out *fatal*,—intelligence; for, I do not see how, from the deplorable and protracted bad effects it has had upon me, AS IT WAS, how I could, without some such preparation, as I had undergone, have stood it.

And do you really suppose, may some of those presuming wise ones, who would remain incredulous to every thing that they cannot fully comprehend by their limited faculties, that the Great Being, who has created so many august bodies, and regulates with unerring skill, the great and mighty concerns of the universe, could have stooped to any thing like a providential, as *you* may call it, but *miraculous*, as in this case, we are bound to call it, interference, in the concerns of a solitary individual,—an atom in an atom world,—who must lay his account to be governed by general rules, and the ordinary methods of HIS operations, in the affairs of men?—

Why, I have mentioned the facts exactly as they oc-

curred,—and let *these facts* speak for themselves,—but for my part, I can see nothing, more inconsistent, in the supposition that, the great Governor and Almighty Ruler of the Universe, should busy himself with the concerns of a solitary individual,—or, with one of us *puny mortals*, as these sage persons in their wisdom, may style MAN, the noblest creature in the material creation, uniting as he does in his own person, a material structure with the order of intelligences,—than that,—in HIS capacity of creator, HE should have taken no less pains with the various springs of action in the construction of a fly,—or a mite,—than with those, necessary, for the movements of, the stupendous elephant.

It is quite a mistake in comparing great things with small, to attempt by that means, to set limits to the power of the ALMIGHTY,—

“Who sees, with equal eye, as God of all,  
A HERO perish,—or a SPARROW fall.”—

WHO, can feel it no more a disparagement to his character, as LORD OF ALL, to give, on one occasion, General Junot, some foretaste, of what he was to experience at the battle of Lonato, through the medium of a “night vision,” than to give on another, the far famed Brutus, an intimation through the medium of his “evil genius,” of what he was to meet with at Philippi.\*—WHO can think, it no more degrading,

\* The story of Brutus and his evil genius, is familiar to every school boy, who has read Plutarch.—But that related by the Duchess of Abrantes, in her memoirs lately published, in respect to the dream of her husband, on the evening previous to the above battle, can, as yet, be only known to a few, I will here, therefore, give it in her own words :—

“The evening before the battle of Lonato; Junot having been on horseback all the day, and rode above 20 leagues, in carrying the orders of the General-in-Chief, lay down overwhelmed with fatigue, without undressing, and ready to start up, at the smallest signal. Hardly was he asleep, when he dreamed he was on a field of battle, surrounded by the dead and the dying. Before him was a horseman clad in armour, with whom he was engaged. That cavalier, instead of a lance, was armed with a scythe, with which he struck Junot several blows, particularly one on the left temple. The combat was long, and at length they seized each other by the middle. In the struggle, the vizor, the casque of the horseman, fell off, and Junot perceived that he was fighting with a skeleton ;—soon the armour fell off, and death stood before him, armed with his scythe. “I have not been able to take you,” said he, “but I will seize one of your best friends.—Beware of me!”

“Junot awoke bathed with sweat. The morning was beginning to dawn, and he could not sleep from the impression he had received. He felt convinced that one of his brother aid-de-camps, Muiron and Marmont, would be slain in the

with the equal eye in which he beholds all his creatures, to give the writer of this, call him if you will, *one of the lowest*, of the lowest order of intelligences, some little foresight into futurity, by means of a dream, the better to prepare him for what was to happen,—than to instruct, that most noble and exalted character, Socrates, by the same means, on the night previous to Plato's, being put under his care for tuition, of the nature of his young charge,—and the splendid fame he was destined to arrive at.\*

I do not mention these things as implying my unqualified assent to their veracity.—They may be true, or they may be not, but I distinctly believe, that the power of the Almighty is unbounded, and unconfined, in these respects, and that He can vary his modes, and means, of conveying and communicating impressions to the mind, as well as on the senses, at his pleasure.—In fact, to apply the sage remark of Goldsmith, in reference to the creation of the monsters of the deep,—to these, out of the ordinary course of things, methods of communication,—“to believe all that has been said of *such things*,” would be too credulous, and, to reject the possibility of their existence, would be a presumption unbecoming mankind !†

approaching fight. In effect it was so: Junot received two wounds,—one in the left temple, which he bore to his grave; and the other on the breast; but Muirton was shot through the heart.” (See Memoirs of the Duchess of Abrantes.)

\* The story of the dream of Socrates, on the night previous to his future disciple, Plato, being presented to him by his father, is related under the head of Plato, in Fenelon's Lives of Ancient Philosophers.

† There is a circumstance recorded in my Retrospections which, although it happened too far back to be detailed among the events of this, what I may well call, *THE FOURTH BOOK OF MY LIFE*;—yet, as the probability is great, that I may never have an opportunity of bringing it before the public, afterwards, and as a brief recital of it, will no doubt astonish some of my readers as much as the subject of my dream, I shall here introduce it, as illustrating my argument, that impressions may be conveyed to the mind for the most benevolent of purposes, &c. and consistent with what are called natural causes too,—although they may appear to be somewhat out of the usual way.

I recollect perfectly well, that at the time I was so bad of the dangerous fever, with which I was afflicted near the end of 1803, and, the effects of which, as must appear in my last chapter, I have not yet got quite the better of, I was lying one night broad awake, at the moment that a female relative,—my wife's mother,—was in the act of going out of the chamber door, having just been relieved by her daughter, who had taken her place at my bed-side. She had, as I well remember, just got the length of the door,—I was lying, at the time I think, in a pretty easy and composed state, and, so far as I recollect had eyed her with calmness, as she receded from the bed-side:—when all on a sudden, my wife (who,

But, to return from this digression,—with whatever composure I was at first enabled to bear up, under the afflicting intelligence, for which, I must always insist, I was in a great

blessed be God, is still alive to testify to the truth of what I am recording) was no doubt startled by my exclaiming in a rather loud and vehement manner "*Guard!*" The old woman to whom the word was no doubt addressed, as might have naturally been expected, rushed back into the chamber—My wife looked with astonishment;—but as soon as I had time to recover myself a little, I assumed the most placid appearance I possibly could, and said, with a smile, or rather a kind of half-suppressed laugh, "*I thought your Mother was the Guard of the Mail Coach*"

The fact is, that at the moment, the old lady had reached the chamber door, she all on a sudden underwent (according to the then state of my powers of vision,) a most complete transformation,—and instead of now appearing in the grave and sober habiliments of a grey mantle, &c. in which she had just left the bed-side, and in fact, in which I traced her distinctly in her progress towards the door,—she stood before me, in all the dazzling splendour of a rosy looking guard of his Majesty's Royal Mail, not, let it be observed, in one of his almost worn out suits, or about to be, cast off garments, but as if, he had been just decked out in his best attire of glittering gold, on shining red, in honour of his master,—the king's—birth day.

The moment, however, that Mrs ———, came within a certain point of distance, from my optic nerves, she resumed her wonted form, and former habiliments,—and it was, in consequence, of this double transformation having been so suddenly effected, in my presence, without my being conscious how it took place, that my risible faculties were somewhat excited, at the time I gave the little explanation,—all I could give,—to my wife.

There can be no better evidence that I was quite sensible at the time, both before and after this happened, than the proper and natural appearance the old woman assumed for the second time! while I eyed her with attention, as she again progressed towards the door—through which, however, (now that I was prepared for the event) I was obliged to allow her to pass in silence, in the exact garb and appearance she had before assumed, at the same point of distance, viz. the rosy cheeked and splendid attired Guard of the Mail Coach!

But all this, I will be told, was the consequence of delirium,—I know it was, and from what I experienced on that occasion myself, I shall ever look upon the illusions, consequent to delirium, in those cases of acute bodily suffering, where only indeed they will be found to be generally prevalent, as among the most merciful, among the merciful ordinations of Providence.

And shall I deny to the Author of these merciful ordinations, created as they may appear to be, by the illusions of a diseased brain, that praise and gratitude due, for what I myself have experienced from them, merely because, I cannot tell by my limited faculties, and the confined powers of my optical vision, even in its most healthy state,—how such things are brought about,—or the manner in which they are occasioned,—amidst the varied and wonderful workings of Omnipotence!

No! we must, in these instances of benevolent interference, by whatever natural means, they are effected, (for it is only by such means, in such cases, the God of nature works) adore, and adoring own, with gratitude, the kind provisions of that providence, which, by means of such illusions, carries off, and diverts, our attention in the moment of extreme suffering, to those unsubstantial creatures of our distempered (though it be) fancy,—which amuse us at the time they relieve us from anguish;—and causes, even "*Night Visions*" to befriend us, on particular occasions, or on some pressing or trying exigencies,—by whatever means,—or in whatever manner—such things are occasioned.

That I might have been led, or predisposed to dream about Mr ———, at



degree prepared by that memorable dream,—yet, when I had had, a little time to recover myself, and think over a matter, which I soon saw, left me only one alternative, I could not help feeling sore, very sore, at the peculiarly calamitous state, to which I had been so suddenly, and at a time, so utterly unexpected, reduced ;—and that I did feel sore, to an alarming extent, the situation to which the state of my health was soon brought, gave too evident demonstration.

Indeed, I have often said, when reflecting on the sudden and rapid effect these sad reverses, appeared to have taken, both on my health and spirits, and the great efforts Mr ———, and other kind friends had to make, in order to induce me to *endeavour* to take sustenance and to bear up with more composure on this trying occasion,—that, I never thought any thing earthly could have affected me so much,—and if this should be urged against me as affording no great evidence of *my strength of mind and disposition* to overcome, I must just plead as an apology for the excess of my grief,—that it was for the sufferings of others, more than my own, I felt most acutely,—aggravated by the forlorn consideration, that I had now arrived at a time of life, more calculated for a state of repose than that of *increased toil*.

So far, however, from wishing to die, and so get quit at once of my toils and my burdens, I often repeated, that I was never more desirous in my life to live,—and well might I,

that precise time, in consequence of my having been so recently thinking of writing to him, is very possible ; and that I should see him on that occasion, in the Mail Coach, a situation in which I had often seen him before, is also far from being improbable ;—and so far my dream may be accounted for, on common, or what are usually designated natural principles ;—in the same manner as the bustling warrior, after a bustling day of preparation, may be much predisposed to dream of being engaged in the fight—on the night before the battle.

But, who, in either case, can advance one step farther in clearing up the mystery,—by the strongest reasoning powers of the most acute reasoner—for what connexion had the preparations of Junot, with the ominous pageant that was made to pass before him in his dream ;—allowing that the relation of the story afterwards to his duchess was exactly as it happened :—And what connexion could my previous intention of writing Mr ———, or my having seen him oftner than once in the Mail Coach, allowing these circumstances to have led me so far into the matter of my dream—what connexion, I say, could these have with the mysterious development, and no less mysterious warning, given me by my visionary monitor,—whose misfortune, at the time of my dream, had not been whispered—and whose circular, in fact, was not issued, until the day after I had recorded it !

for, if the philosopher of the Lake of Geneva, was correct, so far in his estimation, as formerly noticed, according to the imperfect notions of human duty he entertained, what must have been the conclusions I should have come to, who stood at once in the two-fold capacity of a *debtor* and *the father of a family*,—and at the same time, professed to be governed by, that more perfect system of ethics, which prohibits suicide, and admits not, of a man proving the coward, and basely deserting his post, until legally summoned away by his Maker,—on any account, or under any pretence whatever.

But, still, there was something so very afflictive in the idea, that others should again suffer, as well as myself, *through this new misfortune*,—and that, at SO LATE AN HOUR OF MY DAY, when I might have so little in my power to make them amends,—that I could not, with all my philosophy, aided by the efforts of christian resignation and fortitude,—help, for some time, sinking under the pressure of my calamity.

Alas ! little did I think, when I first sat down to these Retrospections, that, at a time, when I had almost congratulated myself, with having, at last, got over them, and considered myself on the eve of entering, if I had not already entered, on a “ more successful period,” than I had experienced for many years ;—I should all on a sudden find myself, once more, driven back to the tumultuous ragings of a tempestuous hurricane,—all on a sudden, have my efforts frustrated—my hopes blasted,—and all my fond anticipations, and pleasant prospects overwhelmed, and lost, in one confused mass of darkness and dismal obscurity,—in a moment.

The extent of my calamity, at such an advanced period of my life, with the affecting considerations necessarily attending such a situation,—in a properly regulated mind,—will, I trust, prove the best excuse I can offer for my infirmity, in sinking under it,—and will, not be refused as my apologist, by HIM who knows the true extent of our sufferings, and our griefs,—as well as the causes and the motives—from which those sufferings and sorrows proceed.

Well, I took the advice of my visionary monitor, and did call a meeting—call a meeting,—but not until I took a short time to consider, and deliberate on the matter—during which,

I found; it was the only alternative I could adopt. But it is a great consolation for me to think, that, if I felt so sore under the unhappy alternative to which I was reduced,—I had soon many indications that *others felt* for me as well as myself.

My circular was issued on the 22d of December, and before the end of the year, I had deeds of accession handed me, not only agreeing to what measures might be proposed, at the meeting which was intimated to be held on the 5th of January,—but really written in such a kind and condoling strain,—that, notwithstanding the suspense, I must necessarily have remained in, at the time the old year passed away, must have done much to console me,—and to make the year, so far, depart in peace.

One of these letters, dated the 30th Jan. from a *young* representative of an *old firm*, with whom, I had been long acquainted in the way of business, is so much to the purpose, that I cannot forbear copying the greater part of,—indeed, I may say the whole, with the exception of the signature, &c. and with that pleasant little December flower, conclude my present chapter.

“DEAR SIR,—It is with much regret—we notice, that circumstances have again compelled you to stop payment.

“After a life of continued—unwearied exertions—in honest industry—to such a mind as yours, it is a most severe blow :—the high opinion we have always had of your integrity, will induce us to concur in any arrangement you may propose, at the meeting, for the settlement of your affairs.

“We remain, Dear Sir,

“Yours truly,” &c.

— 30th Dec. 1831.

## CHAPTER XLV.—1832.

THREE FIRST days, in one.—Time, that cures many a wound, had not as yet, its desired effect on me.—Mournful cogitations attending a melancholy contrast.—Still, some grounds of consolation and incentives to gratitude.—Sundry affecting considerations.—Again, a stricken deer.—An aged tree nearly torn up by the root.—A blasted and withered shrub of long standing—at last falls before the blast.—A new claim to an old title.—Consolatory considerations, notwithstanding all these.—Melancholy Sunday, which ushered in an irksome and mournfully eventful week.—Meeting takes place.—Plain speaking statements.—Accompanying address.—Short-comings, how again to be accounted for.—All our hard earned earnings again gone.—This, still not the greatest matter of regret.—Immediate acquiescence in the measure proposed, by the parties present.—Deeds of accession soon come in from absentees.—A few anxious days of suspense.—Hear at last from a kind friend.—A precious gem worth preserving.—Timeous arrival to put me in spirits, and enable me to rise, as it were, to newness of life, on another Anniversary of my Birth.—Wonderful changes produced in a very short time.—How I was affected by the contents of my kind friend's *friendly* letter—Idea suggested by that letter.—Resolution in consequence.—A most appropriate motto, at the commencement of my work.—“MANY UPS AND DOWNS,” indeed, in my eventful pilgrimage.

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THE first Sunday of 1832, arrived in the threefold capacity of—the *first* day of the year,—the *first* day, of course, of the month,—and the *first* day of the week ;—but it was not the *first* Sunday, since my recent overwhelming misfortune broke upon me ; for two Sundays had intervened since that time—sober enough, I dare say, although I have no note or recollection, of the circumstances attending them.

Indeed, it is very probable, that my thoughts would be so absorbed, in the sudden change that had befallen me, and the deplorable condition to which I had been so unexpectedly reduced, as to swallow up all other considerations, for the present.

The short time that had elapsed since the 17th, the day on which the fatal intelligence reached me, may, however, be supposed to have done something towards restoring me to composure, and bringing me somewhat to myself ; and it must be confessed, that, in ordinary cases, the lapse of a few days sometimes, has a very wonderful effect.

But, alas ! mine was *not* an *ordinary case*, and the wounds, which, in their green state, or when deadened, by the surprise, the suddenness of the event had occasioned, had now, the more I had had time to reflect, upon the unhappy circumstance, begun to fester, or to bleed afresh,—and the 1st of January found me far, very far indeed, from being in possession of a mind at ease, or, in that state of calm composure, in which, in midst of all my toils and discouragements, I was found—*on that day twelvemonth*.

The contrast, indeed, could not fail to affect me much, as the several circumstances which induced comparison would flit across my perturbed mind. THEN, might I not think—but one short year since—I stood high in hope—big with expectation—and, already, as it were, indulging in the joyful anticipation, of having now arrived, or being on the point of arriving, at that more successful period, so confidently predicted by my friend ;—Now, I was deep sunk in the slough of despondency,—if not of absolute despair !—my former expectations all passed away as a visionary representation—my fond anticipations dashed from my lips ere I had yet tasted them—and no friend *now left*, to cheer me up by his comfortable prognostications, and to assist me forward in the way of promoting their fulfilment, by a continuance of his own kind offices—for I must do that friend the justice to remark, that, up to the last moment, these were not withheld to the utmost of his power ;—nay, by some of his more recent communications, that long-tried friend seemed still to be disposed to serve me, when, alas ! that power was gone.

THEN, I might again think, I had left the shop on the Saturday night, only solicitous about having my exhausted powers restored by the rest of the Sabbath, in order that I might return on the Monday morning, with renovated vigour, to the pleasing toils of the week :—Now, I might have thought, what restorative can administer to a mind diseased,—and a body so broken, and a constitution so shaken, as mine had now become—and that in the short space of a few days !—and what cordial, I might have farther thought, sufficiently strengthening, to fit me for the approaching conflict—with *all the other arduous and irksome duties of the week !*

THEN, I might have concluded, I had been borne up by the delusions of brightening prospects, never, ah never ! to be realized—and in the fond anticipation of, what turned out in the end, to have been deceitful joys, never to be come at : Now, however, I saw through, in my unhappy experience, the delusions and deceptions, that HOPE, the last refuge of the wretched, had been practising upon me,—and which, might have made me afraid, to trust myself, to the suggestions of Hope for the future.

But, whatever I thought, or might have thought, in these respects, there were, nevertheless, some grounds of consolation, and motives for gratitude, which, in the solitude of that silent Sabbath, I trust, did not altogether escape me.

I was, indeed, again a STRICKEN DEER ;—AN AGED TREE, DREADFULLY SHAKEN, AND ALMOST TORN UP BY THE ROOTS ;—or, rather, may I not say, at my time of life, and in allusion to the humble sphere I had been accustomed to move in, in society—A BLASTED AND WITHERED SHRUB, of long standing, indeed, but which had now given way before the remorseless pelting of this new, and deeply aggravated storm ;—and had again, a new claim, to the VERY AFFECTING TITLE I had assumed, as so peculiarly adapted to my case, on a former occasion.

But still, the consolation I had already derived from those numerous communications, which had contributed so effectually to pour in their respective balms into the wounds affliction had made, and of which I produced such a precious specimen, as a conclusion to my last chapter—the circumstance of my having yet *one* friend, who, in addition to the kind sympathy he had expressed for my sufferings, and the strenuous exertions, and forcible arguments, he made use of, to induce me to *try* and take sustenance, and such other matters as might be conducive to the restoration of my health,—manifested the strongest disposition to serve me, and render himself useful in the way of carrying me forward to the completion of my settlement ;—and the comfort I must have experienced, from the consideration, that, although the *fearful dream*, as I called it at the time, had been realized, in almost its literal sense, yet it had borne marks, by its effects, as having been rather sent to me as a messenger of kindness ;—

for, I could not, at that time, have forgotten, as I now trust I never shall, the benignant service it rendered me, a few days after it happened, in breaking a stroke, which, as I have already observed, without such a preparation, might have been too much for me,—and so been the means of beagging too heavily on,—or pulling too hard at,—as the poet would express it—

“ My nerves,—those tender strings of life :  
Which, pluck'd a little more, will toll the bell,  
That calls my few friends to my funeral !”

must have acted, or ought to have acted, as so many incentives to gratitude.

But, whatever was my conduct, or however remiss in my duties I may have been on the occasion, that melancholy Sunday passed away,—and on the Monday morning, I commenced the labours and disagreeables of that eventful week, on which my meeting was to take place ; and on that week, the meeting eventually did take place, but not until I had been fully prepared for it, after a most laborious task, in making up our minute inventories, &c. So that, I was able to lay before the gentlemen assembled, such a set of plain-speaking statements, as must have set all attempts at chicanery (had there been any) at defiance, accompanied by the following address, which will be allowed to speak for itself :—

TO SUCH OF MY CREDITORS AS MAY MEET THIS DAY, IN MR COSSAR'S  
INN, DUNDEE.

“ GENTLEMEN,—There are few people, I believe, who have toiled more, and longer, AT THE OAR OF HUMAN LIFE, than I have done, to so little purpose to themselves.—It is not, however, my present intention, to take up a portion of that time, which you are now called upon to devote to other purposes, by any detailed account of my grievances.

“ My mind, indeed, is too much distressed for the task, by recent calamitous, and, to me, overwhelming events, to allow me, even had I more inclination to do so. I cannot, however, forbear, stating, that, the circumstance that weighs most heavily on my mind at the present moment, is, the harrowing consideration, that, so many of my *old* and *kind* friends should have suffered with, and through me.

“ The several statements here exhibited, will shew, at a very slight glance, how my affairs stand with the world. The debts will be found to be pretty correctly stated, although, the general amount, for want of the proper returns of some of them, may be, a few pounds in or over.

“ The Inventory from which the abstracts are made up, will be found to be taken with a minuteness of detail, which might surprise any one, who would have the patience to look it over,—and that part of it, denominated, “ Household Furniture, &c.” will be found to comprehend, THE VERY BED I LIE ON.

“ Such as they are, however, every thing is at your service, and disposal, if you think that more can be made of them, for the general good, otherwise

than remaining in my hands, at the humiliating offer I am so reluctantly compelled to make, but which, it is too evident, from the *depreciated, unsaleable, and unavailable* nature of so great a proportion of the articles,—is as much, as I can be expected to realize from them, in any reasonable given time, viz." &c. &c. &c.

"And I remain, Gentlemen, with sentiments of all deference to the decision of the Meeting, your very obedient Servant,

(Signed) "GEORGE MILLER."

N. B. It may be proper to add, that, in accounting for my short-comings, I was enabled to make up a statement of losses, &c. not only, fully equal to the amount of those short-comings, but actually exceeding them,—which shews again, that all our hard earned profits at the back of the counter, &c. for these last four years, must have gone, to enable us to make up the difference, as far as it was practicable; or, at least, to make that difference the less—and had *these* only been found sufficient to have covered all,—how little would we have regretted the sacrifice.

I need scarcely say, that, after the exhibition of these statements, and accompanying address, I had my offer, painful as it was for me to make it, accepted, and my wishes gratified, by the immediate signature of acquiescence of all the parties present, of whom Mr ———, of ———, was very judiciously chosen preses.

After the meeting, no time was lost in transmitting a printed copy of the minute, as signed by the preses, to the absentees, and deeds of accession soon came in from all quarters.

There was one gentleman, however, from whom, on account of the length and extent of our dealings, &c. I was particularly desirous to hear, but from whom, I had not heard, up to the morning of the 13th.

In course of that day, however, I heard from my friend. His letter forms too precious a document to be altogether left out of my records, although it may be necessary to shorten it a little. Here, therefore, follows a pretty full extract from this precious gem:—

"——— 12th January, 1832.

"DEAR SIR,—I received both your letters, which gave me some uneasiness, I have now got over it, and feel very much for you and Mrs Miller,—more so than I have for myself.

"You may believe me, it was more for want of time, than any thing else, (except inclination,) that prevented me from writing you sooner, and now agree to the offer of composition you have made; and trust, you have taken care not to offer more than you are able to pay.

"Make my compliments to Mrs Miller, and tell her, I feel most sincerely for her. She must keep up her spirits, and hope for better days. Many ups and downs you have had in this world, but we should remember, this is not our resting place. You must again excuse haste, and believe me still," &c.

This letter, although dated on the 12th, did not reach me till the following day, when, although it came late, it came still in good time, to soothe my breast, before retiring to rest.



on the evening of the 13th, and so enabled me to rise, as it were, to newness of life and increased vigour, on the ensuing morning—the morning, again, that ushered in another anniversary of my birth.—Alas ! what changes had taken place within the compass of that memorable year, so considerable a part of which I had devoted to my Retrospections !—or, rather, during the short period (for a month had not yet expired) since I laid those Retrospections aside ;—and, fatal resemblance ! too truly to be verified—**HUNG MY HARP UPON THE WILLOWS.**

In reading over this kind, frank, and friendly letter to my partner,—upon its receipt, on the evening just alluded to,—I must *not say*, that I was able to accomplish it with a certain degree of composure ; for, to use an expression in the next kind letter I shall have occasion to quote—“ my feelings got fairly the better of me,” and I was not able to accomplish it at all.

I could say much, very much, on this subject, but I know that I have said as much already, as I will, perhaps, from certain hints I have got, get thanks for. Expressive silence must, therefore, be my refuge on the occasion—further than, that, if I live, I trust, the worthy gentleman will not altogether lose his reward ; and, whether I live or not, he must ever carry about with him the testimony of an approving conscience, as an earnest of what he may expect, when he experiences, in his own person, that “ **THIS IS,**” indeed, “ **NOT OUR RESTING PLACE,**” by being called to a heavenly and more enduring inheritance.

There is another expression in that letter, which I must not forget to mention ; for more depended upon it, perhaps, than the writer had any idea of, at the time he adopted it, or the recorder of it in these pages, most assuredly had, at the time he was obliged to desist from reading it,—on the memorable evening of its arrival.

My kind friend, it will be observed, among other things, makes the following remark :—“ **MANY UPS AND DOWNS YOU HAVE HAD.**” Now, it strikes me forcibly, that it was from the suggestion these words conveyed, knowing, as I did, that my friend was correct, that the idea of introducing the “ *ups and downs,*” both into my original and more recently pub-

lished prospectus, originated ;—and, for *his* sake, were there no other reason, I shall endeavour to preserve these “*ups and downs*,” whatever alteration I may otherwise be disposed to make, in my present title ;—which resolution, I hope, my kind readers will be the more disposed to approve of, now, when, I trust, they are fully convinced, by the perusal of these pages so far, that I have, indeed, had my “*many ups and downs*” in life,—and that, a more appropriate motto, than that which I have prefixed to the first of my introductory chapters, could scarcely have been chosen.

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## CHAPTER XLVI.—1832. (CONTINUED.)

Many are the instances of kind treatment I received otherwise.—Reasons for being more particular in my notices of some cases, than others.—And for adopting certain extracts as my mottos, at the beginning of my first chapter.—Am overwhelmed with acts of kindness from all quarters.—My wholesale merchants, again not singular in this respect.—Conduct of old friends and customers.—All classes and descriptions of persons, seem actuated by the same kind and feeling spirit.—Names not mentioned, but which, can never be forgotten.—My earnest prayer in their behalf.—Happy results of these simultaneous and encouraging acts of kindness.—Expedients that I thought of, and had recourse to, in my extremity.—My first attempts meet with disappointment.—Try a new method, by endeavouring to dispose of the books of my private library.—At same time, intimate my intention, of bringing out these “*Latter Struggles*,” if likely, to meet with encouragement.—Original circular and Prospectus.—Early encouragement to proceed.—Specimen of the manner in which my catalogue, and accompanying circular, &c. were received by my old correspondents.—Publish my enlarged prospectus.—Pleasing consideration, which must have contributed much to restore my health, and revive my spirits.—Prosperity gives friends, but adversity tries them.—My old brethren in the book trade not backward, to evince a fellow feeling on the occasion.—Kind offices of certain respectable firms in my behalf.—Reasons why I selected these particular houses, as my friendly auxiliaries.—One expression in the letter of one of my coadjutors, particularly gratifying.—I am not long in coming to the resolution of proceeding with my task.—Commence writing my MS. in earnest.—Go to Press.—And, find myself able, to send the present chapter in good time, to the printer, after having had some ground to fear, that my “*LATTER STRUGGLES*,” would, in the end, have turned out—“*DEADLY CONFLICTS*.”

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It is not to be understood, that, in dwelling longer on my kind friend's letter, than I will, as I observed, perhaps get

thanks for, from himself, I have been any way remiss in my duty of gratitude, to the other gentlemen, with whom, in the way of dealing, I was similarly situated, and who, have also dealt so kindly and generously with me.—No ! many are the instances of kind treatment I have received, and many are the effects of the most generous feeling I have experienced otherwise, which, to use a strong Hebrew expression, I shall never forget, until my right hand forgets her cunning, and my tongue shall cleave to the roof of my mouth ; and if I have made particular reference, only, to one individual, in addition to the above, I trust, all suppositions of invidious distinction, will be done away, when I shall have given some explanation.

The other individual, then, the gentleman who wrote me the very feeling and friendly letter, of the 30th of December, and from which, the extract at the end of a preceding chapter is taken, is the only representative of a house, with which, I had been in the practice of doing business for a period of upwards of forty years !—and a testimonial from whom, I must, therefore, have considered, as of no ordinary importance ;—while, of the gentleman who wrote the very affectionate and pathetic epistle, so largely quoted in the last chapter, let it be understood, was not only one of my most early acquaintances in the way of business, now remaining, at the helm of affairs himself, (and long may he continue to do so,) but, that our transactions had been so numerous, and so extensive, in the course of time, that no person could form a better estimate, than that worthy gentleman, of what our deserts were—and how far, we still deserved his sympathy, on this late lamented occasion. Hence, I considered, the few feeling and friendly lines from his pen, as indeed “ A PRECIOUS GEM worth preserving ;” and hence, the reason why the quotations from these two estimable and much valued letters, (although without any disrespect or disparagement being meant to the others,) have found a ready, and so conspicuous a place, by the way or in the shape of, mottos, at the beginning of the first of my introductory chapters.

But, I may well say, as I have often said of late, that *I have been overwhelmed by kindness,—experienced from all*

descriptions of persons,—on that mournful occasion. Those numerous acts of kindness, by which my soul was so often melted down into the most grateful emotions, were far from being confined to gentlemen connected with me only as wholesale dealers, and who, of course, as the principal sufferers, it was proper to bring forward prominently in the list.

My good friend, the Rev. Mr JAFFRAY, our own parish minister, was very assiduous in his kind attentions, on this lamented occasion, as he had been formerly, on that, of my son's illness and death ; and it gives me much pleasure to state, that the name of that gentleman stands *first* on the list of names for my "Latter Struggles," and which, has been since followed, by those, of the greater part of the gentlemen composing our Presbytery ;—while, I have also the satisfaction to add, that the Rev. Mr JACK, of the first Associate Secession Congregation in this place, had the kindness to set an example to his flock, by being the *FIRST* to send in his name, on the very day on which I issued my new and enlarged prospectus, and so had evinced my determination to proceed with my work.

My good *old* friends, and *long* respected customers, on hearing of my great misfortune, seem to have vied with each other, in order to convince me, that however unfortunate I had been otherwise, I had not, as yet, fallen any thing in *their* estimation—while the circumstance of others, of a *more modern date*, continuing to deal with me, as formerly, was a further corroboration, that MY PROBITY and INTEGRITY, these invaluable jewels in the number of the poor man's treasures, and the acknowledgment of which, by so many kind friends, had been such a solace to me on previous occasions,—yet remained unsullied.

In short, all classes of the community, from among the most respectable, and first, families of the neighbourhood, down to the humble artizan, and daily labourer, who were accustomed, to leave part of their earnings in my shop, on each returning Saturday evening, in exchange for the necessary weekly supply of goods,—seem to have been actuated by the same simultaneous, generous impulse, on this afflictive occasion :—an endeavour, to make me forget, the unhappy reverse by

which I had been so recently afflicted; and to encourage me, to bear up, under this new pressure of life's evils:—

And this, let it be observed, was not in words, but in deeds,—not in empty professions of air-built stability; but, in the more tangible and solid manifestations of their sympathy,—*a continuance of their kind and obliging favours—in the way of business*,—at a time when, every favour of the kind, must have been more obliging than ever,—and which, while the recollections of these kind friends, and customers, who *never* forsook me in the day of adversity, can never be obliterated from my memory,—must demand, and shall have, my lasting gratitude.

The result of all this was—that my little family establishment, instead of being broken up, and its members scattered, has been preserved—my business, instead of giving any indications of falling off, for the first three months after the unfortunate disaster took place, and while my attention was necessarily so much taken up with the affairs of my settlement, had rather given evidence of an improvement:—That my credit too, in that short period, instead of suffering much diminution, had been in a great degree restored;—and, as a natural consequence of all,—that my health, which had been, so recently, dreadfully shaken, and become so exceedingly precarious, was soon found to be considerably amended,—and I was once more again, in some degree enabled, to rally my depressed spirits, and to proceed with alacrity, in the way of preparing myself for my new engagements,—in order to enable me, by the time stipulated,—to carry them into execution.

Among the various expedients I thought upon, for so desirable a purpose, so soon as my mind was brought to this more composed and collected state, was, that of endeavouring *immediately*, or with the greatest possible expedition, to dispose of my surplus, or rather—remaining stock of books—chiefly consisting of my own publications;—and which, being taken into the inventory of course, could not be otherwise, made available for the purpose intended.

To effect this, I first made offer of those of which I *possessed* the greatest number, to a quarter from which I ex-

pected a favourable return. In my expectations, here, however, I was doomed, once more, to meet with disappointment—for, to my first letter to that quarter, dated the 23d January, 1832, I have, to this day, received no answer,—and I may add, that I have not been, as yet, more fortunate, in regard to the disposal of that part of my stock, in some other quarters, to which I had applied. These *formerly* kind friends may, however, have had reasons for their silence that I am not aware of; and I may, perhaps, yet hear from them, on their learning, from these pages, that I was so much in earnest in my application.

If, in these attempts, however, I was unsuccessful, there was no reason why, I should give up the point of bettering my condition if possible, in such a time of need, by other efforts;—and the *next* I resolved upon, was, to try and dispose of *the greater part of the books of my private library!*—OLD FRIENDS, and well cultivated acquaintances *were some of them*, but this, was one of those imperious occasions,—when the *Oldest friends must part*.

After waiting, therefore, for at least a month longer, to see if there was likely to be any thing forthcoming from the former attempt, I issued, of date the 28th of February, my “CATALOGUE OF BOOKS, GLOBES, MAPS, &c.” at reduced prices, at which, they were to continue for three weeks from that date, if not previously disposed of.

But as, I soon saw that I could count upon no great things from that part of my plan, (let the sale go as it might,) towards making up the deficiency, arising from my disappointment, in respect to the other method. I, without waiting the result of this new experiment, embraced the opportunity of sending out my catalogues, to accompany them with the following circular, of same date,—28th of February:—

“BEING compelled by circumstances to begin, as it were, the world again, at a time of life when it would have been much more desirable to have withdrawn from its pursuits, I have been induced to adopt, as one expedient, to put me in the way of, being better enabled to get on with my *new* task, and to do something for my support in the “winter of life,” to part with many of my old friends and early companions, in the shape of the Books of my Private Library, which you will find, mixed up with a number of other Articles, in the Catalogue herewith sent; and, I need scarcely add, under existing circumstances, that should any of them be thought worthy of a place in your former collection, the favour of an *early order* will be gratefully received.

"Although, from the present state of my health and spirits, (which have suffered much by recent events,) I can promise nothing positive at this time, in that respect, yet, if it shall please the Almighty to restore me to a due measure of both, by the end of the ensuing summer, it is my intention, as a further effort to enable me to rise above misfortune, and in accordance with my long established habits of literary pursuit, to issue a Prospectus, for publishing, by subscription, what I would now call, in allusion to the melancholy occasion :

**LATTER STRUGGLES IN THE JOURNEY OF LIFE;**

**FROM, THE RETROSPECTIONS OF A SEXAGENARIAN.**

In which, some of the more recent Ups and Downs,—the Joys and Sorrows,—the Hopes and Disappointments,—of a life passed in comparative obscurity, but replete with much striking vicissitude, and not without some occasional attempts to be useful, will be delineated in such a way, as cannot fail to interest the careful observer of the providential development of human events,—to excite the sympathy of those who admire the patient and persevering efforts of suffering humanity, in the midst of misfortunes of an appalling nature, and surrounded by difficulties of a no ordinary description,—and to impress upon all, the instability and uncertainty of earthly comforts and human acquirements.

For the reasons mentioned, I can, as yet, say nothing positive on this head, but, as the promised patronage of a few of my friends, may have some influence in bringing me the sooner to make up my mind on the subject, I shall feel much obliged by your signifying, *at your earliest convenience*, how far I may count upon *your name*, and of such of your friends as you may be able to prevail upon to join you, in the event of my coming to a determination to proceed, &c.\*

This letter, it will be observed, by the last paragraph, was intended to serve, as a mean of ascertaining the sentiments of the public as to this particular,—as well as, an announcement of my intentions, in case those sentiments were favourable—and in the latter capacity, it was soon found to act in a very efficacious manner; for, along with orders for the books, it brought in the most encouraging inducements for me to go forward,—from many an *old* friend and *new* acquaintance;—from the former of which, the following extract of a letter, dated the 9th March, may be taken as a pleasant specimen.

My friend, in the beginning of his epistle, commences, "I was duly favoured with your letter, dated the 28th ult. and was so much affected by its melancholy contents, that, in attempting to read it to Mrs ———, my feelings got fairly the better of me, and I was obliged to desist.—Although to an honourable and independent mind, it must be distressing in the extreme, to see every effort blasted, and the cup of happiness dashed from the lip, at the moment of expected enjoyment, still I am certain, that, in the midst of all your misfortunes, you have at least, the cordial sympathy of all your friends. And I fondly hope, that you will yet be enabled to pass the remainder of life in ease, and comparative independence." And after pointing out the articles, he wishes me to send him from

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\* What follows, in regard to the number of pages, price, &c. I do not consider it of any consequence to repeat, as by the time the New, or more enlarged Prospectus issued from the Press, it was found necessary to make some alteration in these particulars, not, however, of such a nature as to occasion any demur, among those who had previously sent in their orders,—for the substituting of 400 pages in the place of 360,—and of, a cloth back, instead of paper boards,—at the trifling addition of sixpence, must, at once, have appeared as an evident *advantage* to Subscribers, and in which light it could not fail to be held by them.

the Catalogue, this kind friend, of *many* a year's standing, and now residing at some distance from our locality, goes on to say, "Should the Sexagenarian think proper to give his retrospections to the world, he may rest assured, that every exertion shall be made, to procure as many Subscribers as possible," which, indeed, from former experience, I had no reason to doubt, would be the case.\*

But this, although assuredly a most pleasant specimen, is but one, of the many kind and encouraging communications, I now received from all quarters, and which, with the number of names, that continued also to be sent into my shop, from so many respected and much esteemed individuals, soon left me, little reason to hesitate, as to the propriety of publishing my prospectus, in due form,—in case my health was sufficiently recovered by the time mentioned,—and other matters admitted.

That prospectus, dated the 1st of August, was in consequence, put into a state of circulation, and it really must have contributed much to the restoration of my spirits, if not to my health, to see how my kind *old* friends, and *new* agents, busied, and interested themselves, for me on this occasion.

Not only did individual subscriptions, for *one* or *two* copies, continue to pour in, to swell the lists I kept under my own more immediate management, but my correspondence with my agents at a distance, soon convinced me, that, notwithstanding the opposition they met with from *cholera*, and other causes, they were far from being unmindful of my interests; indeed I must say, that, although in some of my expectations I fell short, there were others of my agents, who far exceeded my most sanguine expectations.

If there is truth in the adage, "Prosperity gains friends, and adversity tries them," I certainly may say, and say it truly, that if I had an opportunity at this time, to make many experiments of the latter kind, in *many* of them I found—that my friend, weighed in such a balance, was not found wanting.

Even my *old* brethren, the booksellers, when it came to be my turn to address them, on the occasion,—although one

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\* This letter, it will at once be seen, is that alluded to in my last chapter, and an attention to the words will shew, that my quotation, as there stated, is quite correct. Alas! that in the short time which has intervened, that kind and sympathizing friend should have lost his amiable partner, who would no doubt, feel for us on this lamentable occasion, as well as himself.



: of them, a gentleman whom I much esteemed, and was in fact a subscriber himself, gave me rather a kind of damping hint on the outset, by bidding me not be *surprised*, if the efforts of his house *should not be effectual*, for a particular reason which it is unnecessary to repeat—shewed, that there was still a fellow feeling among that respectable body of men, for AN OLD BROTHER OF THE TRADE, who had spent upwards of forty years of his time, in the exercise of, and in learning their profession—and who must have therefore, *turned to them*, as significantly hinted at in my circular to booksellers—with the more fraternal fondness.

The kind services of the house of Messrs Oliver and Boyd, and Mr Cadell, of the firm of Messrs Robert Cadell & Co. among their brethren in Edinburgh—and of Mr J. Lumsden, of the firm of Messrs J. Lumsden and Son, in Glasgow, I trust this humble record will be the means of preserving in lasting remembrance. But that nothing may appear invidious, or disrespectful, to the many other worthy individuals in the line,—in consequence of, my having particularly selected these gentlemen, for conducting the business for me in their respective cities, I shall here state, as briefly as possible, my reasons for so doing.

The house of Messrs Oliver and Boyd was selected for, not only *old acquaintance* sake, but the great number, and some of them to a very considerable extent, of transactions, which had taken place betwixt us,—without, I believe, a mistake of any consequence, if indeed any at all, or a single angry word ever being exchanged, on any occasion whatever. It is now a long time since the 25th of December, 1804,—that *memorable Christmas day*,—when, over our *beef steak*, instead of a *goose*,—and my watch lying upon the table to mark the progress of the minutes, lest I should miss the coach, I cleared Mr Oliver's hands so effectually of his "Little Warblers," &c. previous to my setting out upon a pretty extensive business journey myself, and I think, just at the time, *he* was making preparations for the arrangement with his respected partner, who, having since the firm commenced, taken an active part at the helm, must have a tolerable idea of, the nature and extent of my transactions, with the house since that period.

The firm with which Mr Robert Cadell is connected, I selected partly for a similar reason ; for many a transaction, and some of them too to a pretty considerable amount, I had had, with the old firm of Messrs A. Constable & Co. downward from the time formerly alluded to, in which I had the extensive one, in regard to the Beauties of Scotland ;\* and partly, from the circumstance, of Mr Cadell's feeling conduct—the friendly part he acted—and the kind advices he tendered me,—on the evening before, the meeting which took place, on the 7th September, 1816,—which I still remember with gratitude, however little thanks that good gentleman got from me at the time.

In regard to my other good friend, on this occasion, Mr James Lumsden, I may plead also, almost the same apology—the long time I had been in the habit of doing business with his respected father, another of my old and early acquaintances—the extent of my transactions with that firm for such a length of time—and the uniform friendly disposition, which, the only now representative of the firm has manifested to me ;—and of which, I have just now, had so convincing a proof, in the exertions he has made, to increase the number of my subscribers.

And truly, in selecting these worthy agents, I have not been disappointed,—their kind exertions, I cannot forget, while their lists are preserved for my government in sending out the copies ordered,—and while these pages remain to record them, there is little danger of my forgetting them afterwards.

There was an expression in a letter from one of my kind coadjutors, on this occasion, which gave me much pleasure, “ *the trade are more actuated by a regard for yourself, than to the buying of new books, with any hope of being able to sell them again.*” This could not but be very gratifying, when conveyed in a letter, accompanying a list of the names of all the individual gentlemen he had seen on his rounds, but one, and that one, I am not without hopes, of still seeing on my subscription paper.

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\* See note ‡ page 42 and 43 of the present volume.

It was on the *first* of August, as I observed before, and as I see by the date, that I first issued my enlarged prospectus to the public—on the *first* of September, I sent out my circular to booksellers—and I think about, or by, the *first* of October,—I must have been so far satisfied with the amount of my returns, as to enable me, to make up my mind to go on with the work.

I waited, however, during the lapse of another month, to allow time for more returns to come in; and on the 15th of November, set myself down in earnest, to my manuscript, which, by the 14th of February, I had brought to such a state of maturity, as to allow me to lay it aside without inconvenience, while I made preparations for the printing; and, in the mean time, of date the 25th of that month, I issued my last circular, intimating my intention of going to press “early in, or by the middle of March at furthest,” and so “as the work may be out as early as possible in June.”

In course of the month of March, I see I did go to press, and now (this day, June 21, 1833,) I am able to send *this, the last chapter, save one*, to the printer,—so that, if I can only keep things moving forward for a few days longer, I shall not be much behind my time after all.\*—And that, not without having experienced another series of *ups* and *downs*, attended by their corresponding *hopes* and *fears*, arising out of circumstances over which I had no control, and which, it appears, I had not given sufficient consideration, at the time I issued my last circular, in February.

This series, though short, has been upon the whole, pretty severe—indeed so much so, that more than once, I have trembled for the consequences,—and no wonder, my readers may say, when I further inform them, that during their

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\* And, I had little need to be so; for the mortality among my much esteemed subscribers has been so great, during the short period since I published my prospectus, in August last, that it makes me melancholy, on looking over my lists, to think, how many of the eyes that I expected would, about this time, have met these pages, are now closed in death:—giving me so much reason to tremble, for my own safety, and to say, as I draw towards the end of my task—

“When in this vale of years I backward look,  
And miss such numbers—numbers too of such,  
Firmer in health, and greener in their age,  
And stricter on their guard—and fitter far  
To play life’s subtle game,—I scarce believe  
I still survive.”

continuance, I have been led to express my fears,—that, these, what I have styled “MY LATTER STRUGGLES,” would, in the end, turn out “DEADLY CONFLICTS !”

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## CHAPTER XLVII.

### OR, THE CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

Some very pertinent questions that may be put, in this stage of the business.—

At best, the work in its present state, must be considered but a melancholy medley.—Very different from what it would have been, had my subject and limits permitted me to have gone further back into THE VISTA OF TIME.—Answer to the supposable remark, that it may not yet be too late to do so.—I would be in no want of materials for a continuation of my work, —Nor at a loss for titles for my additional volumes.—No apology necessary, in regard to the manner in which I have redeemed certain pledges.—But much, in respect to the way, in which I have executed my task, otherwise.—I have, however, too good an excuse, for any deficiencies or defects in that respect, which must go far to disarm the powers of criticism.—In what manner the present volume may be found useful, notwithstanding all its blemishes and imperfections.—No prospect, for the present, can be held out, that I shall proceed with my more early reminiscences.—Varied instances of well-known characters, who have died at their post.—Weighty considerations against my indulging in the idea of proceeding further at this time.—Drop the subject in consequence, and proceed in my endeavours, to render my present attempt productive and available, for the purposes intended.—No saying to what resolution I may come afterwards.—Grateful emotions to present benefactors, gratefully expressed, —My parting valediction.—My own desire to be resigned, and patiently submissive to the will of the Almighty.—The *best* LAST SACRIFICE.—Beautifully expressive and most appropriate concluding prayer, admirably adapted for all descriptions of persons.—But peculiarly suitable for the aged pilgrim, when almost arrived at the end of THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.

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AND now—I shall not say, my kind and *courteous*, (as has been often said, although, perhaps, sometimes with as much intended adulation as sincerity,)—but, MY KIND and GENEROUS—and, if you have had patience to follow me thus far—PATIENT and INDULGENT READER—What do you think of my “LATTER STRUGGLES,” now that I have set them, although yet in an imperfect and unfinished state, in a kind, so far as we have come, of regular, or orderly array before you?

Am not I borne out in the assertion with which I set out, in my prospectus, that my life, although humble, and passed in comparative obscurity, has been, notwithstanding, “re-

*plete with much striking vicissitude, and not without some occasional attempts to be useful,"* and, as exhibiting, (in particular, that portion of it, which has been brought under your more immediate notice,) a specimen of "*the patient and persevering efforts of suffering humanity, in the midst of misfortunes of an appalling nature, and surrounded by difficulties of no ordinary description ?*"

And have not my conflicts been arduous and severe in the extreme, and of such a protracted and procrastinated nature, as fully to warrant the appellation I have given them, in my title, of "**STRUGGLES ;**"—while, being chiefly comprised in, or confined to, that particular portion of the life of a **SEXAGENARIAN**, which may properly be designated, his **FAST MERIDIAN**, or, the **AFTERNOON** period of his days, the other appellation, that of "**LATTER,**" will be found to be no less, legitimately, applicable—thus constituting, together, in its plain, obvious, and literal sense, in which only I wish it to be understood, the title, which I originally designed for, and have still preserved to,—my book—that of "**LATTER STRUGGLES.**"

As to the *Scriptural* motto, that I adopted for my prospectus, and which is still exhibited on my title,—if it be admitted for a moment, that the author (and who can refuse to admit this,) has had his **UPS** as well as his **DOWNs** in life—his *early joys*, as well as his *latter sorrows*—his *former hopes*, as well as his more *recent disappointments*—his *morning*,—and *forenoon*,—and *noontide*—**ACQUISITIONS** and **SUCCESSES**, as well as his *afternoon losses* and **BEREAVEMENTS**—nothing, certainly, can be more becoming, as well as appropriate, than to make some allusion to such matters, and, in that allusion, to evidence that patient and submissive disposition, by which he wishes his work to be distinguished, and which, it will be observed, I have done in the words of *that motto*—while, the propriety of his *poetical ones*, can scarcely be called in question, when they are considered in connexion with—the humble and obscure situation the writer occupied in society—the few chances he had, of ever being admitted to, any of those high places of power, for which, he is thankful he never had any ambition—and his never, among all his exertions, having made any *effort* to distinguish himself, by any of those deeds which are

generally the subjects of exaggerated eulogy on the *flattering* MARBLE,—which, too often indeed—

“ ————— bids renown,  
With blazon'd trophies, deck the spotted name ;  
And oft, too oft, the venal muses crown  
The slaves of vice with never-dying fame.”

And what,—may I further enquire, are your sentiments in regard to the spirit that breathes throughout the performance—the kind of materials of which it is composed—the manner in which I have redeemed my pledges to the public, in respect to the terms I undertook to bring it before them—and, lastly, how, upon the whole, you are pleased with the way, in which, I have ultimately executed my task, in point of accuracy and general correctness, &c. ?

As to the first, the spirit that breathes through my present volume, I hope it will be found to be, in strict accordance with the expectations I held out in my prospectus—from its agreement with that, by which, I trust, the greater part of my former productions, since the days of my Cheap Tracts, has been distinguished.

As to the kind of materials, of which my fabric is composed, it must never be forgotten, that, on the present occasion, they were not left altogether to my discretion in selecting, but are just such as, (after my misfortunes had confined me to that particular period,) came in my way, in the natural course of events ; and, considering the situation in which I have been placed for *these last fifteen years* of my *SEXAGENARIAN* period, it must be confessed that my book, at the best, must be but a melancholy medley—very different, indeed, from what it would have been, had the whole of my *Retropections* been given to the public ; or, if my narrative had been made to end with the period at which it may be said to have chiefly begun, viz. the close of the three first divisions, of fifteen years each, of my life—and so, like the memoirs of my early contemporary, the well-known JAMES LACKINGTON, have ended with, the forty-fifth year of my age ; for then, indeed, as my reminiscences go to shew, there would have appeared a much greater proportion of the *lights*, and a consequent disproportion of the *shadows*, of life—then, indeed, it would have embraced more of its *joys* and fewer of its *sor-*

*rows*—more of its *sweets* and fewer of its *bitters*—more of its *successes*, and *successful exertions*—and, of course, in a comparative sense, fewer, far fewer, of its *disappointments* and *dreadful discomfitures*.

So that, should any thing appear defective or faulty, in this respect, I trust it will be placed to the proper account—the being obliged to confine myself, in recounting my *Latter Struggles*, to that particular period of my life in which they occurred—and not from any want of materials to have given the work a very different complexion, had the nature of my subject, and my limits, have permitted me to have gone further back into *THE VISTA OF TIME*, in my recitals,—and taken in along with them, the more amusing scenes of infancy and childhood—the interesting indications and early development of character, which the season of youth and youthful activity afforded—and those experiences, and successes, of more mature and riper years, that distinguished and followed my meridian toils, and mid-day exertions—all of which, it must be obvious, had passed away, before I had entered upon, the period embraced in these “*Latter Struggles*,”—and that long protracted series of conflicts, which has since, borne me down to the earth,—had overtaken me.

It may indeed be said, in one sense, that this may yet not be too late ; as, in possession of plenty of materials, I can be at no loss in that respect. I grant that it is so ; but, from certain considerations, I dare not at present indulge in the most distant hope, or hold out the smallest expectation, that it shall be so.\*

\* For want of materials, indeed, I could be at no loss ; for, my three volumes of *Retrospections* would make, each of them, an octavo volume of itself ; and, had I published that work, under the original title of the “*Evening of Life*,” &c., three volumes, each as large and fully printed as the present one, would have been found little enough to have contained these “*Retrospections of a Sexagenarian*,” with what emendations and additions I might have been disposed to make to them, in their progress through the press.

And, as I could have been at no loss for materials—so, it will be seen, by what I am about to state, I could be at as little, for a *new* title for my additional volumes,—to make them correspond, and still chime in with, the other, in making the series more complete, and agreeably to what I had originally contemplated in my *Retrospections* ; for, my first new volume, which might have been made to include the two first periods, or books, of my life, consisting of fifteen years each, I could, very appropriately, have designated with, in that case, the appellation of “*EARLY INCIDENTS, AND INDICATIONS OF CHARACTER ; TOGETHER WITH, YOUTHFUL DEVELOPMENTS, EXERCISES, AND EXPE-*

In regard to the manner in which I have redeemed my pledge as to terms, &c., nothing need be said by way of apology, for it will be found that I have not been long behind my TIME; and in regard to the number of pages, and manner in which my volume is done up, I do not think any objection can be offered, on account of my having substituted 406 pages, in the place of 400, and putting the volume *fully* in cloth, instead of, as promised, merely in a cloth back.

But now comes the last, and, to me, the most alarming part of the inquiry,—for the answer to which, I would be more tremblingly alive, than that to either of the other queries, were it not, that I am prepared with too good an excuse, for any defect or deficiency on that head;—for, my kind friends may rest assured, that it has been no easy matter for one come to my time of life,—with a mind enervated by so many concurrent causes and sources of grief,—and a body sinking daily under its growing infirmities,—to compose, and extend, by committing to paper, nearly five hundred closely written foolscap folio pages of manuscript,—in the short space of three months,—even with all the aid *his* “Night Thoughts” composition, in order the better to enable him to make up for the shortness of the days, at that particular period described in the last chapter, when he was compelled, by circumstances, to sit down to his task—and, afterwards, to attend to the operations of the printer, with the necessary

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RIENCES; IN THE JOURNEY OF LIFE;” and my second,—I might, no less appropriately, and to make it rank well with the other two, either on the shelf, with titles printed afterwards to answer—or otherwise—have designated “*MERIDIAN TOILS; OR, MID-DAY EXERTIONS; IN THE JOURNEY OF LIFE,*”—distinguishing all the three volumes, although published separately, by the same general characteristic, as being taken from “the Retrospections of a Sexagenarian.”

And, let not my readers imagine, that the former volume of the two, necessary to complete the series, would be the most uninteresting, on account of the supposed trifling nature of some of those scenes of infancy and childhood, it would naturally introduce; for, the journey to London, in 1794, in which, an aged friend confessed, I had seen more of its curiosities, in course of a few weeks, than he had done, during his long residence in the metropolis, of *nearly forty years*! (and which, it will be observed, comes within the period of my *second* fifteen years,) will I trust, abundantly compensate for any supposable deficiency in the *first*—although it should be the means of exposing another of my *blunders* in a place of worship, viz., the getting myself locked up in Westminster Abbey, on Saturday the 19th of April, 1794, in consequence of having strayed too far into the recesses of a certain quarter, and which, prevented me from being perceived by the person, whose duty it was to do so, when he came to lock up the entry to that particular part of the sacred edifice. But I must not allow myself to dwell upon a matter, which, according to present appearances, there is so little prospect of my again recurring to at an after period, and which I mean to dismiss from all present consideration, in a subsequent note, (see page 404.)



amendments, and corrections, of the manuscript, while the work was passing through the press,—with so many disagreeables pressing still so heavily upon him, and more than sufficient to distract the attention, even in matters of the most ordinary kind.

There is one comfort, however, arising out of this declaration, and which, makes me adopt it at once, as my best apology and excuse, viz., that it must cause the evil, to carry, in a great degree, its antidote along with it, and go far to disarm the powers of criticism—if, indeed, after such a series of afflictive details as I have been recording, there could be found a being in human form, possessing such a share of malignity,—as to induce him to dip his pen in gall,—for the purpose of wounding anew a heart,—that every one must be convinced,—has already, bled too much—and planting a fresh thorn—in that deeply lacerated flesh,—which has not had,—and which, it is much to be feared, never will have,—time to heal,—rankling, as it now does, under so many seemingly incurable wounds.

Whatever imperfections and blemishes, however, there may be in this work—and that there are many, no person can be more sensible than the author—he trusts it will be found useful on various accounts, and, among others, as conveying, in the way of practical illustration, the following important lessons to the juvenile reader, viz :—

That, as no event, however prosperous, should be suffered to elevate, or lift us above—so no circumstance, however depressing, should be permitted to depress us beneath,—the level of a state of well-doing ;—that, although fortune is so exceedingly fickle, that he who is as *Cræsus* to-day, may be as *Cadras* to-morrow—and the happy and cheerful aspirant of the spring of 1815, may become, the miserable and mourning despondent of the autumn of 1816,—as has been too truly verified in my own case,—yet, from the example of the good man of the land of Uz, we should never allow ourselves to give way to despair ;—and that, although (as is too fully verified in these pages,) the race is not to the swift, &c. we should never let go our hold of the *anchor of hope*, till *hope* itself, with sensation, fails—borne up by the comfortable assurance, *that*, however we may fall short of our expectations,—in temporals, as well as in spirituals,—he only who endures to the

end, has any reason to expect, that his labours and efforts shall be crowned with, final success.

These, of themselves, cannot fail to prove a kind of short system of stimulating ethics, which, I trust, the younger part of my readers will not fail to profit by, although it should never be in my power to come before them, with a series of recitals that might be more agreeable, because more congenial to their turn of thinking, and the bent of their juvenile minds,—but of which, from certain considerations formerly alluded to, I can hold out not the smallest prospect at present.

Indeed, I might well, at the present moment, urge the propriety of this, from considerations of health alone;—for, I am well aware, and every day's experience convinces me more and more, of the great decay that has of late taken place in my bodily powers,—and know not, how soon, my mental energies may also sink beneath those co-operating causes,—which, sooner or later, must, to all appearance, bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.

And yet, were these the only considerations—I scarcely think that I would be deterred from, at least, making the attempt of a trial to proceed, with another volume of my lucubrations; for, the worst that could happen, in the event of my being cut off in the midst, or at the beginning of, my task, would be, if found in the way of duty otherwise, that I should die at my post; and in what situation, it may be asked, can one better be found, when the last summons arrives, than at his post—whether he happens to be, at the time, in the performance of an act of devotion, like Cruden, who was found dead upon his knees—in the progress of some benevolent mission, as was the case with John Howard—in the prosecution of some useful discovery, like Captain Cook—while engaged with our farm, or our merchandize—our trade—our manufactures—or our toils of any kind,—in the pursuits of honest and laudable industry,—as many a worthy character has been employed, at the time he was called away—or, in writing a book, during the WINTER OF AGE, not for amusement, (for he stands in more need of repose,) but in order the better to shelter his head from its ravages, and

shield himself from its devastations,—like the present employment of the writer of these pages,—who being now, almost unfitted for other exertion, would most willingly render himself useful, in any way he can, in order to prevent him becoming burdensome to others.\*

But, whatever may be the event,—and however, or whatever way, I may be called upon to dispose of my time, afterwards,—I desire to be GRATEFUL in the *truest, sincerest*, and *most comprehensive* sense of the word, to those—I shall not merely call them KIND FRIENDS—but, INDULGENT BENEFACTORS, who have come so HUMANELY and BENIGNANTLY, as well as *seasonably* and *opportunately*, forward, to patronize me in the present attempt,—when it had become so indispensably and imperiously necessary, that I should exert

\* But, as I said before, there are other considerations—and, as some of the most weighty of them are, that it would be extremely improper for me to say more on the subject of a continuation of my work, under any title, or to any extent whatever, before knowing how far my present volume shall be acceptable to my present patrons, and how far, in consequence, they might be disposed to encourage me in any such attempt;—I shall, therefore, for the present, let the matter drop,—and proceed in my endeavours, with the kind aid that my present good friends may be pleased to give me, in the way of helping away with those supernumerary copies which I was necessitated to put to press, in order to supply any future demands, that I had reason to expect, in consequence of the interruption I met with, from *cholera*, and other causes which I deem it unnecessary to repeat,—while my subscription process was in progress—and in the disposal of the remainder of my other publications, agreeably to the terms of the notice attached to the end of this volume—to make the result of the present experiment as productive and available as possible, for the purposes originally announced, and in which, I have no doubt, all of my well-wishers will, with good-will, bid me God speed.

¶ And, if, in the meantime, I find my health improving, and a likelihood of there being a demand for a continuation of my work, from my present subscribers, (to meet whose wishes, I trust, I shall never want the will, however I must be otherwise guided by circumstances,)—there is no saying, after all, what resolution I may come to:—It being expressly understood, that, in case the decision should be, that I go forward, it shall be upon the determination, that I neither tax my own strength, beyond the bringing out—or the purses of my kind patrons, to a greater amount than the price of—a single volume, in course of one year,—and, further, on the understanding, that such of my subscribers for the continuation, as may not be pleased with my “EARLY INCIDENTS,” &c., and be disposed, in consequence, to proceed no further, shall be at perfect liberty to withdraw, upon giving me notice to that effect, within three months from the publication of that volume; and to recede, without accompanying me further, in the way of witnessing my MERIDIAN TOILS—and the unremitting and arduous nature of my exertions,—during “THE BURDEN AND HEAT OF THE DAY,”—however desirable it might have been to me otherwise, to have seen the *series* brought more to a completion, agreeably to the form I had originally contemplated in my Retrospections; although, from the manner in which the present volume is now brought before the public, it must be considered, as in a great measure *complete of itself*, without further addition.

my talents in some way or other, to RAISE MY HEAD, if possible, *once more*, ABOVE THE BILLOWS OF MISFORTUNE—and to do something, for the sake of existence, at a time of life, when, alas ! it would have been so much more desirable, if circumstances had been otherwise, and so have permitted, *altogether to have withdrawn from—LIFE'S PURSUITS.*

For such well-timed kindnesses, my considerate and sympathizing friends, are well entitled to, what they shall have, *my most grateful* PARTING VALEDICTION—My best wishes, and most sincere prayers, ever attend their steps :—may none of them ever know what it is to want a friend in time of need, who have given such evidence, in my case, that they do not want feeling :—may goodness and mercy follow them, all the days of their lives :—and when, they are about to exchange the habiliments of mortality for those of a more enduring nature, —to leave off the concerns of time for those of eternity,—may they do so, in the full assurance of meeting with that hearty welcome, “ Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant ; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things :—enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

In regard to myself, whatever may be reserved for me in the womb of futurity—whatever conflicts or struggles, I may be yet called to endure—whether this may be my last offering in print to the public, or I may be yet spared, and induced to make another,—I desire to be resigned, and patiently submissive to the will of that Almighty Being, who reigneth and ruleth over the regions of both worlds ;—in whose hands are the issues of life and of death ;—and who doeth according to HIS pleasure,—whether it be among the loud hosannahs of the heavenly hosts,—or, the secret griefs,—the painful struggles,—the agonizing conflicts—of earth's probationary inhabitants.

This is, undoubtedly, the *best* LAST SACRIFICE we can offer ; and, in testimony of the sincerity of my desire to be found willing to make such a sacrifice, WHEN MY HOUR IS COME, I conclude the subject of my present cogitations, with the following beautifully expressive, and most appropriate prayer, from my old favourite, Dr YOUNG—which, although admirably fitted, and excellently adapted, for persons of every age

and sex—degree and capacity,—situation, or condition in life,—is, most, appropriately suited to the AGED CHRISTIAN PILGRIM, when, arrived near to the end of his journey, he stands, as it were, on the confines of both worlds,—and leaning over the brink of the grave :—PATIENTLY WAITING FOR THE EXPECTED CHANGE,—without being at all *solicitous*—as to the manner HOW,—the place WHERE,—or, the time WHEN,—the event shall take place :—

“ O THOU ! great Arbiter of Life and Death !  
 Nature’s immortal—immaterial, Sun !  
 Whose all-prolific beam, late called me forth  
 From darkness—teeming darkness—where I lay  
 The worm’s inferior—and, in rank, beneath  
 The dust I tread on—high to bear my brow,—  
 To drink the spirit of the golden day,  
 And triumph in existence ;—and couldst know  
 No motive, but my bliss ; and hast ordain’d  
 A rise in blessing !—With the patriarch’s joy,  
 Thy call—I follow—to the land unknown :  
 I trust in THEE, and know in whom I trust ;  
 Or life—or death—is equal ; neither weighs :  
 All weight in this—O LET ME LIVE TO THEE !”

THE END.



